HARVARD SERIES

LIBRARY EDITION

THE UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS
LIBRARY
From the collection of
Julius Doerner, Chicago
Purchased, 1918.
845G23
Oj.E

"THE EVIL EYE"

BY

THEOPHILE GAUTIER

AND THE

"SCHWARENBACH INN"

BY

GUY DE MAUPASSANT

CHICAGO:
W. B. CONKEY COMPANY.

COPYRIGHT:
1892
MORRILL, HIGGINS & CO.

COPYRIGHT
W. B. CONKEY COMPANY.
1893.

R45G23
Of.E

CHAPTER I.

THE magnificent Tuscan steamer, Leopold, which sails between Marseilles and Naples, was just rounding the point of Procida, and the passengers, all effectually cured of seasickness by the welcome sight of land, were gathered on deck, eagerly watching the approaching shore. They were divided into a variety of groups, each distinguishable by some marked characteristic. There were English lords, members of the House of Commons, City merchants, Sheffield cutlers, all carefully shaven, with stiff cravats, well-polished boots, and none of those little disorders of dress incident to travel; such marvels of exactness, in fact, that one might have thought they had just emerged from a band-box. They were mostly accompanied by their wives and daughters, the former equally correct, immovable and bored, while the latter, charming girls, with cream and strawberry complexions, were busily engaged consulting guide-books, jotting down impressions, or repeating with the most

673191

delicious British accent the consecrated phrase: "*Vedi napolie poi mori*," and taking not the slightest heed of the Don Juan glances of the Parisian fops who came back and forth incessantly, to the great annoyance of the irritated mammas who apostrophized French impropriety in very audible voices.

Near the limit of the aristocratic quarter three or four young men were pacing up and down leisurely puffing their fragrant Havanas. They were readily recognized as artists by their gray felt-hats, sack-coats and wide linen trousers, indications that were further confirmed by moustaches *a la Vandyck*, hair curled *a la Rubens*, or cut brush-like *a la Paul Veronese*. They also cast frequent glances at those pretty English faces, but with a different motive, animated only by their love of the beautiful.

On the bow of the ship, leaning against the rigging or sitting on coils of rope, were grouped the steerage passengers, devouring the food left intact on account of sea-sickness and entirely oblivious of the magnificent panorama unrolled before their eyes. The appreciation of nature is, after all, the almost exclusive privilege of

cultivated minds, for they are not totally absorbed by the material necessities of life.

The weather was beautiful; the blue waves rose and fell with scarcely enough force to efface the wake of the ship, the smoke from the stack formed into clouds in the glorious sky and wafted away slowly like light flakes of snow, and the wheels dipped into an ocean of diamond drops that sparkled in the sun, agitating the water with joyous activity as if conscious of the proximity of the shore.

That long line of hillocks which extends from Pausillippe to Vesuvius, outlining the marvelous gulf beyond which Naples reposes like a sea-nymph drying herself on the beach after a bath, was beginning to show its purple undulations and detaching itself more clearly from the azure of the dazzling sky. A few white dots standing in relief against the more somber hue of the ground betrayed the presence of villas scattered through the the country, while fishing-smacks, returning to the harbor, glided over the still water like swan feathers wafted by the breeze, announcing human activity on the majestic solitude of the sea.

A few more turns of the wheels and the chateau Saint-Elme and Saint-Martin convent appeared on the summit of the mountain that shelters Naples, dominating the church domes, hotel terraces, house tops, facades of palaces and verdure of gardens vaguely defined in a transparent mist. Then the chateau d'Oeuf crouching on its foam-bathed rock seemed to advance toward the steamer and the pier whose beacon stretched out like an arm bearing a torch.

At the extremity of the bay the bluish tints which distance lends Vesuvius were changing into more solid and vigorous tones, its flanks becoming furrowed and ridged with ravines and cooled lava, and from its summit arose innumerable small jets of white smoke that floated in the air.

They could clearly distinguish Chiatomone, Pizzo Falcone, the quay of Santa-Lucia with its line of hotels, the Palazzo Reale with its rows of balconies, the Palazzo Nuovo flanked by Moucharaby's towers, the Arsenal, and ships of all nations intermingling their masts and spars like gigantic trees of a forest despoilt of foliage, when a passenger whom no one had seen during

the passage, emerged from his cabin. Sea-sickness or unsociability had kept him away from the deck, or it may have been that this spectacle, new to most of his fellow travelers, had long been familiar to him and offered no interest.

He was a man of six and twenty, or at least one might have given him that age at a first glance, but when closely scrutinized he seemed either younger or older, there being so much freshness and weariness mingled in his enigmatic physiognomy. His hair was of that obscure blond which the English call auburn and flamed up with metallic reflections in the sunlight while it seemed almost black in the shade. His clear-cut profile offered the purest lines. He possessed a brow of which the phrenologist would have admired the protuberance, a nose of noble aquiline curve, lips clearly cut, and a chin whose powerful roundness recalled ancient Greek medals. And yet these features, beautiful in themselves, did not compose an agreeable ensemble; they lacked that mysterious harmony which softens the contours and blends them together.

There exists a legend of an Italian artist who, wishing to portray the rebellious archangel, portrayed him in a mask of incongruous beauty, producing a much more terrible and sinister effect than he could have attained by means of horns, circumflex eye brows, and gaping mouth.

The stranger's face produced an impression of the same kind. His eyes, however, were even more extraordinary. The black lashes that veiled them contrasted vividly with the pale gray of the pupils and auburn tint of his hair and this peculiarity with the thinness of his nose made them appear nearer together than measures permit in the principles of drawing. As to their expression, it was truly undefinable. When they wandered into space, an expression of vague melancholy and languishing tenderness filled them with a misty light, but when fixed on some person or object, the eye-brows contracted, producing a perpendicular wrinkle in the forehead, the gray pupils became green, dotted with white spots and streaked with yellow fibers, the glance seemed piercing, almost wounding, then each

feature abruptly resumed its placidity, and this Mephisto again became a young man of the world, with apparently no thought beyond that of spending the season in Naples, and delighted at the near prospect of resting his feet on a less movable foundation than the deck of the Leopold.

His dress was elegant, without attracting the eye by any conspicuous detail. It consisted of a dark blue coat, a black dotted cravat, the knot neither careless nor studied, a vest of a pattern similar to the coat, and light gray trousers that fell over a dainty boot. A plain gold chain was attached to his watch, and his eye glass was suspended from a flat silk cord, while in his neatly gloved hand he held a small twisted cane with a silver knob.

He took a few steps forward, allowing his gaze to wander vaguely toward the approaching shore, where could be seen rolling carriages and the usual groups of idle people, for whom the arrival of a *diligence* or a steamer is an ever new and interesting spectacle, although already witnessed a thousand times.

A fleet of small boats of all descriptions was

already leaving the pier for an assault on the Leopold, carrying a swarm of hotel couriers, cabmen, facchini and a variety of rogues, who consider a stranger as their legitimate prey. Each boat was endeavoring to outstrip the others, and the boatmen, according to custom, exchanged volleys of jeers and vociferations that might have frightened strangers not accustomed to the habits of the Neapolitan lower classes.

The young man with auburn hair adjusted his eyeglasses on his nose to obtain a better view of the scene that was passing before his eyes, but his attention was soon turned from the sublime spectacle of the bay by the concert of cries arising from the flotilla and concentrated on the boat. The noise evidently annoyed him, for his eyebrows contracted, the wrinkle appeared in his forehead, and the gray of his pupils assumed a yellowish tint.

Just then an unexpected foam-crested wave rolled in from the sea, passed under the steamer, raising it and allowing it to fall back heavily, then dashed on, breaking against the quay into a shower of spray, giving the sur-

prised promenaders a sudden bath and bringing the boats together with such violence that two or three facchini were precipitated into the water. The accident was not serious, for these rogues swim like fish or marine gods, and they reappeared a few seconds later, with hair clinging to their temples, ejecting the bitter water from their mouths and nostrils and evidently as astonished at their sudden plunge as must have been Telemachus, son of Ulysses, when Minerva, under the guise of the sage Mentor, hurled him from a high rock into the sea, to tear him from the love of Eucharis.

At a respectful distance from this odd traveler near a pile of luggage, stood a small groom, a sort of old man of fifteen years, a gnome in livery resembling one of those beings dwarfed by the Chinese. His flat face, in which the nose was hardly visible, seemed to have been compressed from infancy, and his small eyes had that gentleness and softness certain naturalists find in those of the toad. No gibbousness rounded his shoulders or swelled his chest, yet he gave the impression of being a hunchback, although one would have

searched for the hump in vain. In a word, he was a very correct groom, who might have presented himself without molestation at the Ascot races or at Chantilly. All gentlemen riders would have accepted him on his bad shape. He was unpleasant to the sight, but, like his master, irreproachable of his kind.

The steamer reached the quay, and after a final exchange of abuse, the porters shared the passengers and luggage, and took their different roads to the many hotels of Naples.

The traveler with the eyeglass and his groom directed their steps toward the Hotel de Rome, followed by a phalanx of robust facchini, who made the pretences of panting and sweating under the weight of a hat box or a light package in the naive hope of a larger tip, while four or five of their comrades, who displayed muscles as powerful as those of Hercules, so much admired at Studi, pushed a hand-cart in which were placed two trunks of medium size and moderate weight.

When they had reached the hotel and the *padron di casa* had designated the apartments they were to occupy, the porters, although they

had received three times the price of their work, began to make frantic gesticulations and discourses, in which beseeching formula were mingled with threats in the most comical proportions. They all spoke at the same time with a frightful volubility, claiming more remuneration, and calling on Heaven to witness that they had been insufficiently recompensed for their fatigue. Paddy, who had remained alone with them, for his master, without heeding this turmoil, had already ascended the stairway—resembled a monkey surrounded by a pack of hounds. He tried to calm this storm by a short harangue in his maternal tongue, that is to say in English; but as this met with little success, he doubled up his fists, placed his arms across his chest, and assumed the most correct attitude of a boxer, to the great hilarity of the facchini. Then with a blow from his right, worthy of Adams or Tom Cribb, which landed on the chest of the giant of the band, he sent him sprawling on his back in the gutter.

This exploit put the rest of the troop to flight; the colossus picked himself up slowly. badly shaken by his fall, and, without thinking

of taking revenge on Paddy, limped away, rubbing his hand on the spot where his body had come in contact with the lava pavement, fully persuaded that a demon was concealed under the jacket of this dwarf only fit to ride a dog, and whom, he had expected to overthrow with a breath.

The stranger summoned the *padron di casa*, and inquired if a letter addressed to M. Paul d'Aspremont had not already reached the Hotel de Rome. The landlord replied that a letter bearing that superscription had arrived a week previous and he hastened out in quest of it.

The letter was enclosed in a thick envelope of cream-laid paper and sealed with aventurine wax. It was written in those slanting and angular characters denoting a high aristrocratic education, and which young English girls of good families possess a little too uniformly.

M. d'Aspremont opened this letter with a haste that denoted something more than curiosity, and read the following:

"My dear Monsieur Paul:—We reached Naples two months ago. During the voyage,

which we took by easy stages, my uncle complained bitterly of the heat, the mosquitoes, the wine, butter, and beds. He declared that one must really be insane to leave a comfortable cottage, a few miles from London, and travel over dusty roads lined with detestable inns in which an honest English dog would not spend the night. But although grumbling, he accompanied me, and I might have led him to the end of the world. His health is no worse and mine is better.

We are installed on the sea shore in a white-washed house concealed in a sort of virgin forest of orange and lemon trees, myrtles, laurels, and other exotic vegetations. We enjoy a magnificent view from the terrace, and you will find a cup of tea or an iced lemonade every evening awaiting you. My uncle whom you have fascinated, I know not how, will be delighted to press your hand; and it is needless to add that your humble servant will be glad also, although you nearly cut her fingers off with your ring in bidding her good-bye on the Folkestone pier."

"Alicia Ward."

CHAPTER II.

After dinner, Paul d'Aspremont called for a caleche. As there are always a number of these stationed around large hotels awaiting the traveler's fancy, he was quickly accommodated. Neapolitan hack horses are thin enough to make Rozinante appear overloaded with flesh by contrast. Their scraggy heads, their ribs standing out like the hoops of a tun, their flayed backbones, seem to implore the knife of the knacker as a favor, for the feeding of animals is regarded as a superfluous care by these indolent Southerners. The harness is usually broken or supplemented with ropes, and when the coachman gathers the reins and cracks his whip to start away one almost expects to see the horse vanish and the carriage dispel into smoke like Cinderella's coach when returning from the ball after midnight, contrary to the fairy's command. But nothing of the kind happens; the jaded beasts stiffen their legs, and after a little urging, fall into a gallop which they keep up to the end of the journey. The

coachman communicates his ardor to them, and the lash of the whip awakens the last spark of life hidden in their carcasses. They paw, agitate the head, dilate the nostrils, prick up the ears, and assume an appearance of speed which the fleetest English trotter could not equal. How this phenomenon is accomplished and what power lends speed to these skeletons, we will not attempt to explain. But it is nevertheless true that this miracle takes place daily in Naples and no one displays the least surprise.

M. Paul d'Aspremont dashed through the compact crowd, grazing the fruit stands with their wreaths of lemons, the preserve and macaroni kitchens standing in the open air, the piles of sea fruit and a variety of other things scattered on the public road like bullets on an artillery field. The lazzaroni lying in the shadow of the walls enveloped in their cloaks scarcely deigned to withdraw their feet to save them from the passing vehicles. From time to time, a corricole, balanced between its four large scarlet wheels and carrying an army of monks, nurses, facchini, and idlers, passed beside the

caleche, grazing the axle and enveloping it in a cloud of dust and clatter. The corricoles are now proscribed and their manufacture prohibited; but it is permitted to add a new body to old wheels, or new wheels to an old body, an ingenious means of preserving these odd vehicles, to the great satisfaction of amateurs of local coloring.

Our traveler paid little attention to this picturesque and animated spectacle, which would certainly have absorbed a tourist who had not found a letter signed by Alicia W. at the Hotel de Rome.

His gaze wandered over the limpid blue sea, where, in a brilliant light tinted by the distant amethyst and sapphire, could be distinguished the beautiful islands grouped in the shape of an open fan, at the entrance of the gulf, Capri, Ischia, Nisida, Procida, the harmonious names of which sound like Greek dactyls, but his soul was not there. It was flying on eagle's wings toward Sorrente, toward a little white house buried in the verdure mentioned in Alicia's letter. At this moment, M. d'Aspremont's face had not that undefinable displeasing expres-

sion which characterized it when no interior joy harmonized its incongruous perfections; it was beautiful and sympathetic, to use a word dear to Italians. The arch of the eyebrows was distended; the corners of the mouth not disdainfully drawn, and a tender light illuminated his calm eyes. Seeing him thus, one could easily guess the sentiments which seemed to be indicated by the half-tender, half-playful phrases written on the cream-laid paper. His originality, added to a great degree of distinction, could not be displeasing to a young girl brought up by an indulgent old uncle in the unrestrained English fashion.

They soon passed Chiafa la Marinella, and the caleche rolled on into the country, on the road since replaced by a railway. A black dust, like pulverized coal, gave a Plutonic aspect to the entire shore which is covered by a dazzling sky and lapped by a sea of the purest azure. It is the soot of Vesuvius, sifted by the wind, that sprinkles those shores, and makes the houses of Portici and Torre del Graco resemble the factories of Birmingham. M. d'Aspremont, however, did not trouble himself

about the contrast presented by the ebony earth and the sapphire sky; he was impatient to reach his destination. The most beautiful road is long when Miss Alicia awaits one at the end, and he had not seen her since the day he bade her adieu, at the Folkestone pier, six months ago. The sky and sea of Naples lose their magic on such a day.

The caleche left the main road, and soon stopped before a gate formed by two white brick pillars surmounted by terra cotta urns, in which aloes expanded their leaves like blades of tin with dagger points. A small green wicket served as gate; the wall was replaced by a hedge of cactus, the shoots forming irregular elbows, and their thorny arms inextricably entwined.

Above the hedge three or four enormous fig-trees spread their large metallic green leaves in compact masses with the vigor of African vegetation; a large parasol pine balanced its umbel, and through the interstices of this luxuriant growth one could scarcely discern the facade of the house sparkling in white patches behind this thick curtain.

A dusky servant, with hair so thick and curly that it would have broken a comb, ran out at the noise of the caleche, opened the wicket and preceded M. d'Aspremont through a path of laurels, the branches caressing his cheeks with their flowers, and conducted him to the terrace where Miss Alicia Ward was taking tea in company with her uncle.

Through a caprice quite natural in a young girl satiated of all the comforts and elegances, and perhaps also to tease her uncle, whose tastes she often ridiculed, Miss Ward had chosen this villa which had been untenanted for a number of years in preference to a civilized dwelling. In this abandoned garden, almost returned to its state of nature, she found a wild poetry that pleased her; under the active climate of Naples, all had grown with prodigious rapidity. Orange trees, myrtles, pomegranates, all had grown freely, and the branches having nothing to fear from the pruning knife, joined hands from one end of the avenue to the other, and even penetrated familiarly into the rooms through some broken panes. It was not, as it might have been in the North, the

sadness of a deserted house, but the wild gaiety and happy petulance of nature when left to itself in the South. In the absence of the master the exuberant vegetation was indulging in an excess of leaves, flowers, fruits and perfumes; it was recovering what men disputed it.

When the Commodore — it was thus that Alicia familiarly called her uncle — saw this impenetrable thicket, through which it was as impossible to penetrate without the aid of an axe as through an American forest, he exclaimed in dismay and declared that his niece was decidedly mad. But Alicia gravely promised to have a passage cut from the gate to the drawing room door and from the drawing room to the terrace of sufficient width to allow the admittance of a tun of wine, the only concession she would make to the *positivism avunculaire*. The commodore resigned himself, for he could never resist his niece, and at this moment he was seated opposite her on the terrace, drinking a large cup of rum, by little swallows, under pretext of tea.

The terrace, which had principally charmed the young girl, was indeed very picturesque

and deserves to be described, for Paul d'Aspremont will often return to it, and we must paint the surroundings of the scenes we relate.

This terrace dominated the road and was reached by steps of large disjointed flags, through which prospered a healthy wild growth of plants. Four uneven columns, saved from some antique ruin and whose lost cornices had been replaced by stone copings, supported a lattice work of willows intertwined and covered with vines, while the decaying parapet leaned over and hung in piece-meal among the plants. At the foot of the walls the India fig-tree, the aloes and arbutus grew in charming disorder, and beyond the thicket the view extented over undulations dotted with white villas to the purple silhouette of Vesuvius, or lost itself in the blue immensity of the sea.

As Paul d'Aspremont appeared on the terrace, Alicia arose with a glad cry and came to meet him. Paul took her hand in his, but the young girl quickly raised her imprisoned fingers to his lips with a movement full of childish playfulness and naive coquetry.

The commodore tried to raise himself on his

gouty limbs and succeeded after a few grimaces of pain that contrasted comically with the jubilant expression that spread over his large face. Then, approaching the charming young couple with alacrity, he grasped Paul's hand and pressed his fingers tightly together in his large palm, this being the supreme expression of old British cordiality.

Miss Alicia Ward belonged to that type of English brunettes which realizes an ideal whose details are a contradiction of each other, that is a skin of such dazzling whiteness as to make snow, lilies, alabaster, virgin wax, and all that serve as white comparisons to poets appear yellow; cherry lips and hair as black as night or a raven's wing. The effect of this opposition is irresistible and produces a wonderful beauty, the equivalent of which is found nowhere else.

A few Circassians brought up from infancy in the seraglio may perhaps possess this miraculous complexion, but for this we have only the exaggerations of Oriental poetry and the paintings of Lewis representing the harems

of Cairo. Alicia was assuredly the most perfect type of this style of beauty.

The oval of her head, the incomparable purity of her complexion, the transparent delicate nose, the dark blue eyes fringed by long lashes that fluttered like black butterflies on her rosy cheeks when she lowered her eyelids, the lips of dazzling red, the glossy waves of hair that fell like satin ribbons around her cheeks and swan-like neck gave a stamp of truth to those romantic faces of Maclise, which seemed so like charming impostures at the *Exposition Universelle*.

She wore a grenadine dress, embroidered with red palms that harmonized charmingly with the grains of coral that adorned her hair and hung about her wrists and neck; and five bangles suspended to a coral pearl trembled in the lobes of her delicate ears. Before condemning this abuse of coral, remember that we are at Naples, and that the fishermen come from the sea expressly to offer you these branches which are reddened by the air.

Having given Miss Alicia Ward's portrait, we must—if only for the contrast—at least

give a caricature of the commodore in the manner of Hogarth.

The commodore was past sixty and presented the peculiarity of having a uniformly enflamed crimson face, on which contrasted snowy eyebrows and muttonchop whiskers of the same collor, giving him the appearance of an old Red-skin tatooed with chalk. The ardent Italian sun had added a few shades to this fiery coloring and the commodore involuntarily reminded one of a crisp almond imbedded in cotton. He was dressed from head to foot; coat, vest, pantaloons and gaiters in reddish gray vicugna wool cloth which the tailor must have given his word of honor was the most fashionable shade worn, and this was perhaps true enough. Notwithstanding his fiery complexion and grotesque garments, the commodore did not by any means present a vulgar appearance. His rigorous neatness, irreproachable bearing and stately manners proclaimed the perfect gentleman, although exteriorly he had much in common with the vaudeville Englishmen as parodied by Hoffmann or Levassor; his character could be summed up in

this: the worship of his niece and drinking of large quantities of Porto and Jamaica rum, to "entertain the radical moisture," according to Corporal Trim's method.

"See how well and pretty I am now!" exclaimed Alicia. "Look at my color; I have not as much as uncle yet, it is true, but I hope I never shall. Just see the red here," she continued raising her taper finger to her cheek, "real red. And beside I have grown fleshy and you can no longer feel the hollows in my shoulders. O! how that used to mortify me, do you remember? when I went to balls. Must not a girl be a great coquette to deprive herself of her fiancé's society for three whole months that he may find her fresh and beautiful after the separation?"

Uttering this tirade in that playful tone which was peculiar to her, Alicia stood before Paul as if challenging a close scrutiny

"Indeed," declared the Commodore, "she is as robust and beautiful as those girls of Procide who carry Greek vases on their heads."

"Assuredly, Commodore," replied Paul; "Miss Alicia is not more beautiful, that is im-

possible, but she is certainly in better health than when, through coquetry as she pretends, she imposed this painful separation on me."

While he spoke, his gaze rested with a strange fixity on the young girl, posing before him. Suddenly the pretty rosy colors she boasted of faded from her cheeks as the blush of night fades from the mountain snows when the sun sinks behind the horizon, she placed a trembling hand on her heart, and her charming lips paled and contracted.

Paul and the Commodore arose in alarm, but Alacia's pretty colors were already returning and she made an effort to smile.

"I have promised you a cup of tea or a sherbet," she said gaily, "and although an English girl, I advise you to take the sherbet. Snow is preferable to hot water in this country bordering on Africa, whence we get a direct southeast wind."

They placed themselves around the stone table under the vine branch ceiling. The sun had sunk into the sea, and the bluish day called night at Naples succeeded the yellow day. The moon dotted the terrace with silvery

patches through the breaks of the foliage, the sea rustled on the shore like a kiss, and from afar could be heard the beating of the tabor in accompaniment of the tarentelle.

The hour of separation came. Vice, the swarthy servant, made her appearance carrying a large lantern to guide Paul through the labyrinth of the garden. While serving the sherbet and snow-water, she had looked on the new-comer with an expression of mixed curiosity and fear. The result of her examination was evidently unfavorable to Paul, for his brow, already as yellow as a cigar, darkened still more, and now as she accompanied him to the gate, she pointed her index and little finger toward him, and brought the two remaining fingers to bear on the thumb, as if to form a cabalistic sign.

CHAPTER III.

ALICIA'S friend returned to the Hotel de Rome by the same road he had come. The beauty of the night was incomparable; the pure brilliant moon was shedding a long train of silver spangles on the transparent azure of the water, and the perpetual murmur of the moving waves multiplied the splendor. Out on the sea the fishermen's boats with their lanterns of flaming oakum fixed at the bow dotted the water with red stars and dragged scarlet traces behind them; and the smoke of Vesuvius, which is white in the day-time, had changed into a luminous column and also threw its reflection on the gulf. At this moment the bay presented that aspect which seems so unnatural to Northern eyes, and which we see in those Italian water colors enframed in black so much in vogue a few years ago, and more faithful than we might imagine in their crude exaggeration.

A few belated lazzaroni still wandered on the shore, unwittingly moved by the magical

spectacle, and their large, black eyes plunged into the bluish expanse. Others were seated on wrecked boats, singing snatches from Lucia, or the popular romance then in vogue, "*Ti voglio ben' assi*," in a voice that might have been envied by tenors engaged at a hundred thousand francs. Like all meridional cities, Naples goes to bed late; yet the lights were going out one by one, and the lottery offices, with their festoons of colored paper, their favorite numbers and brilliant lights, alone were open, ready to receive the money of the capricious players, who should take the fancy of placing a few carlins or ducats on a dreamed-of lucky number.

Paul went to bed immediately on reaching the hotel, drew the curtains of netting over him and was soon sound asleep. Like all travelers after a sea voyage, though motionless, his bed seemed to roll and toss as if the Hotel de Rome had been the Leopold. This impression made him dream that he was still on the sea, looking at the pier where Alicia stood, appearing very pale beside her florid uncle, and making signs to him with her hand not to land.

The young girl's face expressed deep pain, and in repulsing him she seemed to obey, against her will, an imperious fatality. This dream, which assumed extreme reality from the recent meeting, grieved him so that he awoke with a start and was relieved to find himself in his room, in which flickered a small porcelain night lamp, besieged by buzzing mosquitoes. That he might not again become the victim of this painful dream, Paul struggled against sleep, and went over all the childishly charming scenes of his meeting and courtship of Alicia.

He again saw the red brick house, overgrown with briars and honey suckles, which Miss Alicia and her uncle inhabited at Richmond, and where he had been introduced through the medium of one of those letters of introduction, which rarely secure more than an invitation to dinner. He remembered the white India muslin dress, ornamented by a simple knot of ribbon, which Alicia, who had just returned from boarding-school, wore on that day, the branch of jessamine that waved in the cascades of her hair like a flower from Ophelia's crown ; the velvety blue eyes, the slightly parted lips, dis-

playing small, ivory teeth ; the delicate neck stretched like that of a listening bird, and her sudden blushes when the young Frenchman's gaze met her own.

The drawing-room, with its dark wainscotting and green cloth hangings, ornamented with engravings of fox-hunting and steeplechasing, in the glaring colorings of the florid English style, reproduced itself in his brain as in a dark chamber. The piano displayed its row of keys like the teeth of a dowager. The chimney, festooned with a chain of Irish ivy, appeared bright and shining, with its newly-polished metal shell ; the oaken arm chairs, with carved legs, opened their morocco-covered arms; the carpet displayed its rose leaxes, and Alicia, trembling like a leaf, sang Anna Bolena's romance, "*deh non voler costringere*," in the most charming false voice in the world, which Paul, none the less agitated, accompanied a little out of tune, while the Commodore, overcome by a laborious digestion and more crimson than ever, dozed, allowing a colossal copy of the *Times* to slip at his feet.

Then the scene changed: Paul had become more intimate and had been invited to spend a few days in their Lincolnshire home, an ancient feudal castle with embattled towers and Gothic windows half concealed by an immense ivy, but possesing all modern comforts in the interior. This castle stood at the extremity of a lawn where the carefully rolled and watered grass was as level as velvet; a drive of yellow encircled the sward and served as a riding school for Miss Alicia, who, mounted on a rough Scotch pony that kind Sir Edward Landseer loved to paint and to which he gave an almost human expression, took her daily circular promenade ordered by her physican, accompanied by Paul on a bay horse, lent him by the Commodore.

And again a light boat glided over the pond, displacing the water lilies and startling the king-fisher from beneath the silvery foliage of willows. Alicia rowed and Paul guided the rudder; how pretty she was in that golden aureole which the rays of the sunlight penetrating her sun-hat described around her head! She leaned back at every stroke, pressing the

varnished tip of her gray boot against the board of the seat; Miss Ward did not have one of those Andalusian feet, short and round as smoothing irons, which we admire in Spain, but her ankle was slender, her instep arched and the sole of her buskin, although a little long, perhaps, was barely two fingers in width.

The Commodore remained on the shore, not because of his grandeur, but on account of his weight, which would have swamped the frail bark; he awaited his niece at the landing, and with paternal care threw a cloak around her shoulders through fear she might take cold; then after mooring the boat safely they returned to the castle together for lunch. How delightful it was to see Alicia, who usually ate as little as a bird, sink her pearly teeth into a rosy slice of Yorkshire ham, thin as a sheet of paper, and nibble at a roll while throwing the crumbs to the gold fishes.

Happy days pass quickly! Paul put off his departure from week to week, and the beautiful verdure of the park was beginning to assume saffron tints, and white mists arose from the pond in the mornings. In spite of the gar-

dener's rake, which was kept busily at work, the dead leaves strewed the sandy drives, millions of small frozen pearls scintillated on the sward, and at night they could hear the quarreling of the magpies as they flew over the summits of the denuded trees.

Alicia paled under Paul's restless gaze, and only retained two feverish red spots on the summit of her cheeks. She was often chilled, and the brightest and warmest fire could not bring warmth back to her delicate body. The doctor appeared uneasy, and at last advised Miss Ward to spend the winter in Pisa and the spring at Naples.

Family affairs had recalled Paul to France, while Alicia and the Commodore were making preparations to go to Italy, and the separation had taken place at Folkestone. No word had been spoken, but Alicia looked on Paul as her fiance, and the Commodore had given the young man's hand a significant pressure, such as might be given a son-in-law's hand only.

After a separation of six months, which had seemed like so many centuries in his impatience, Paul had the happiness of finding Alicia

cured of her languor and radiant with health. What had still remained of the child in the young girl had disappeared, and he thought with delight that the Commodore could now raise no objection to his niece's marriage when asked for her hand.

Lulled by these pleasant reflections, he again fell asleep, and did not open his eyes until daylight. Naples was already beginning its uproar; the ice-water vendors called out their wares, the cooks offered their viands to the passers-by on the end of a pole, and the lazy housekeepers leaned out of the window and lowered their provision basket by means of a rope, pulling it back again filled with tomatoes, fish, and enormous quarters of pumpkin. Public writers in rusty black coats and pen behind the ear, took their seats at their stands; money lenders placed their ducats in piles on small tables; the cabmen lashed their nags in quest of matutinal customers, and the Angelus rang joyously from every bell in the neighborhood.

Paul enveloped himself in his dressing gown, and leaned his elbows on the railing of the balcony. From the window he could see Santa

Lucia, the fort de 'Oeuf, and an immense expanse of sea that stretched to Vesuvius and the blue promontory where the vast Casini de Castellamare was whitening in the morning light, and the villas of Sorrente stood in relief against the distant blue heavens.

The sky was pure, except for a light white cloud that advanced toward the city, driven by a faint breeze; Paul fixed the strange gaze we have already remarked on this cloud, and his eyebrows contracted. Other masses of vapor immediately joined the unique flake, and soon a thick veil of clouds spread its black folds above the Chateau de Saint Elme. Large drops fell on the lava pavement, and in a few minutes changed into one of those diluvian showers that turn the streets of Naples into so many torrents, carrying dogs and even donkeys into the gutters. The amazed crowd quickly dispersed in search of shelter; the open air shops were hastily removed, though not without losing a portion of their wares, and the rain, now mistress of the field, ran down in white waves on the deserted quay of Santa Lucia.

The gigantic facchini to whom Paddy had applied such a vigorous blow had not followed the general stampede, but was leaning against a wall under the protection of an overhanging balcony, looking at Paul d'Aspremont in a profoundly meditative manner and muttering in an angry tone.

"The captain of the Leopold should have cast this *forestier* into the sea," and thrusting his hand inside his coarse linen shirt, he placed it on a bundle of amulets suspended from his neck by a cord.

CHAPTER IV.

THE storm was of short duration, and the sky soon cleared. The ardent rays of the sun dried up the last traces of the shower in a few minutes and the crowd reassembled joyously on the quay. But the porter Timberio did not alter his opinion in regard to the young French stranger and prudently removed his effects out of sight of the hotel window. A few lazzaroni expressed their astonishment when they saw him leave his excellent station and choose a less favorable one.

"Whoever wants it, is welcome to it, he replied shaking his head mysteriously; "I know what I know."

Paul breakfasted in his own apartments for either through timidity or disdain he always shunned public gaze, and while awaiting the proper hour to call on Miss Ward, he visited the Studj museum. He admired everything in a listless way: the precious collection of Campanian vases, the bronzes dug from the ruins of Pompeii, the verdigris brazen Greek helmets.

each still containing the head of the soldier who had worn it, the piece of hardened clay retaining like a mold the impression of the charming torso of a young woman surprised by the eruption at the country house of Arrius Diomedes, the prodigious muscles of the Hercules Farnese, the Flora, the archaic Minerva, the two Balbus, and the magnificent statue of Aristides, the most perfect piece left us from antiquity. But a lover is not an enthusiastic admirer of art; to him the outline of one feature of the adored one is worth all the Greek or Roman marbles.

Having succeeded in passing two or three hours away at the Studj, Paul now hastened to his caleche and was driven in the direction of Miss Ward's villa. With that appreciation of passion which characterizes Southern nature the driver urged his nags to their utmost speed and soon brought them to a standstill before the pillars surmounted by vases of tropical plants which we have already described. The same servant opened the wicket; her hair still coiled in unconquerable frizzes, dressed as on the previous day in a coarse linen chemise with em-

broidered sleeves, a skirt of heavy fabric, striped crosswise, like those worn by the women of Procida, and her neck mantled by a necklace of colored strings; she wore no stockings, and the bare foot she placed firmly in the dust might have been admired by a sculptor. In addition to this a bunch of horn and coral trinkets suspended from a black string rested on her breast, and to her evident satisfaction, Paul at once fixed his gaze on these baubles of singular form.

Miss Alicia was on the terrace, her favorite spot. The young girl was nonchalantly rocking herself in an Indian hammock of red and white cotton, ornamented with bird feathers and hung to two of the columns that supported the vine branch ceiling. She wore a morning gown of soft China silk which she was crushing pitilessly. Her feet, which peeped through the meshes of the hammock, were incased in slippers of aloes fibers, and her beautiful bare arms were crossed above her head in the attitude of Cleopatra, for although it was but the beginning of May, the heat was intense and swarms

of grasshoppers were singing in chorus beneath the neighboring thicket.

The Commodore, in the dress of a planter and seated on a willow chair, was pulling in measured time on the cord that set the hammock in motion.

A third personage completed the group; this was the Count of Altavilla, an elegant young Neapolitan, whose presence brought that frown upon Paul's brow which gave his physiognomy an expression of diabolical wickedness.

The Count was, in fact, one of those men whom we do not like to see near the women we love. His tall figure was in perfect proportion; his jet black hair massed in abundant clusters encircled a well formed and smooth brow; a spark of the Neapolitan sun glittered in his eye, and his wide, strong teeth, as pure as pearls, seemed still more dazzling in contrast with the vivid red of his lips and the olive tint of his skin. The only criticism a fastidious taste could have made against the Count was that he was too handsome.

As to his clothes, Altavilla ordered them from London, and the most severe dandy would

have approved his appearance. There was nothing Italian in his toilet except shirt buttons of too great value, which betrayed the very natural taste for this Southern child of jewels. Perhaps anywhere but at Naples one might have remarked as of mediocre taste the double clusters of coral branches, the hands of Vesuvius lava with bent fingers brandishing a dagger, dogs with outstretched paws, black and white horns, and other trinkets of the same kind dangling from a common ring attached to his watch chain; but a walk in the Rue de Tolede, or to the Villa Reale, would have been sufficient to convince anyone that the Count was not at all eccentric in wearing these odd gewgaws so conspicuously.

When Paul d'Aspremont had been presented the Count, at Miss Ward's urgent request, sang one of those delicious Neapolitan melodies by some unknown author, one stanza of which if written by a popular musician, would suffice to make the fortune of an opera. To those who have not heard them on the shores of Chiaja, or on the pier, when sung by a lazzarone, a fisherman, or a trovatelle, the romances of

Gordigiani may give some idea of their sweetness. They are composed of a sigh of the wind, a ray of moonlight, a waft of perfume from the orange tree, and a pulsation of the heart.

Alicia, in her pretty, false English voice, followed the air she wished to retain, now and then making a friendly little nod to Paul, who looked at her with ill-concealed bad humor, annoyed by the presence of this handsome young man.

Suddenly one of the cords of the hammock broke, and six hands were simultaneously outstretched toward Alicia, but she had slipped to the ground without injury and was already on her feet, though her cheeks flushed deeply through confusion.

"How singular!" exclaimed the Commodore, "I tried the ropes myself, and Alicia weighs no more than a humming bird."

The Count shook his head mysteriously, he evidently attributed the breaking of the rope to an entirely different cause, not considering the young girl's weight sufficient to cause the rupture but as a well-bred man, he remained

silent and merely toyed with the cluster of trinkets attached to his chain.

Like all men who become moody and savage in the presence of a person whom they regard as a formidable rival, instead of redoubling in amiability and brilliancy, Paul d'Aspremont, although a man of the world, could not conceal his ill-humor. He replied in monosyllables only, allowed the conversation to drop, and whenever his gaze was directed toward Altavilla, his eyes assumed their most sinister expression, and the yellow fibers writhed in the gray transparency of his pupils like water serpents in the depth of a pond.

Each time Paul's glance fell on him, the Count, by an apparently mechanical movement, plucked a flower from the vase at his side and threw it in such a way as to intercept the irritated glance.

"What do you mean by despoiling my vases in that way?" cried Miss Ward, when she noticed his action. "What harm have my flowers done you that you should decapitate them?"

"Oh! nothing, I assure you, Miss Ward; it is

an involuntary trick," replied Altavilla as he cut off a magnificent rose with his nail and sent it to rejoin the others.

"You annoy me terribly," rejoined Alicia "and you have unwittingly come in conflict with one of my manias. I have never plucked a flower. A bouquet inspires me with a sort of horror; they are dead flowers, corpses of roses, vervain or periwinkles whose perfume possesses something sepulchral to me."

"To expiate the murder I have just committed," said the Count bowing, "I will send you a hundred baskets of living flowers."

Paul had arisen and was rolling the brim of his hat as if meditating his departure.

"What, you are already going?" cried Alicia in surprise.

"I have letters to write, important letters," he replied.

"Oh! the hateful word you have just uttered!" explained the young girl with a pretty pout "How can you have important letters to write when they are not addressed to me?"

"Don't go, Paul," said the Commodore, "I have arranged a plan in my head for the even-

ing, subject to my niece's approval; we shall go and drink a glass of water from the Santa Lucia fountain, it smells of rotten eggs, but it is an excellent appetizer; then we shall go and eat a dozen or two of oysters, red and white, at the fish-market, dine under a vine-arbor in some good Neapolitan osteria, drink Falerne and Lacryma-Christi and end the day by a visit to Signor Pulcinella. The count will explain the witticisms of the dialect."

This plan appeared to offer little inducement to Paul, and he took his leave with a cold bow.

Altavilla remained a few minutes longer, but as Alicia, who was annoyed by Paul's departure, did not favor the Commodore's project, he also took his leave.

Two hours later, Alicia received an immense quantity of flower vases, filled with the rarest plants, and what surprised her still more, a monster pair of Sicilian ox-horns, transparent as jasper and polished like agate, measuring three feet in length and terminating in menacing black points. The magnificent setting of gilded bronze was so arranged that

they could be placed as an ornament on the chimney, a bracket, or a cornice.

Vice, who assisted the messenger to unpack both the flowers and horns seemed to understand the meaning and value of this odd present.

Placing this superb crescent—which might have been torn from the head of the divine bull that supported Europa—in a conspicuous place, on the stone table, she said in a tone of satisfaction.

"We are now in a good state of defense."

"What do you mean, Vice?" asked Alicia.

"Nothing, unless it is that the French gentleman has very singular eyes." she replied.

CHAPTER V.

DINNER hour was long passed, and the coal fire that turned the kitchen of the hotel into a Vesuvius crater during the day was slowly dying out under the iron cover. The bright pans had been replaced on their respective nails and shone in rows like the shields on the planking of an ancient trireme; a yellow brass lamp, like those found in the ruins of Pompeii, was suspended from the center beam of the ceiling and illuminated the middle of the vast kitchen, leaving the corners almost in obscurity.

The luminous rays fell from above with playful shadows and picturesque lights on a group of characteristic figures gathered around a much furrowed heavy wooden table occupying the center of the large room whose walls, of that bitumen so dear to painters of the Caravage school, were sadly defaced by the smoke of culinary preparations.

Indeed, the Espagnolet and Salvator Rosa, in their strong love of the true, would not have

disdained the models gathered there by hazard, or, to be more exact, through a habit of every evening.

To begin with there was the *chef* Virgilio Falsacappa, a very important personage of colossal stature and formidable stoutness, who might have passed for one of the colleagues of Vitellius, if instead of a white linen vest he had worn a Roman toga with a purple border. His prominent features seemed a serious caricature of certain types of ancient medals; dark and heavy projecting eyebrows crowned a pair of eyes cut like those of a mask; an enormous nose threw its shadow over a large mouth which was armed with three rows of teeth like the mouth of a shark, and his chin was adorned by a dimple in which he might have buried his fist and joined to a neck of athletic vigor, furrowed with veins and muscles, by a dew-lap as powerful as that of the bull Farnese. Two tufts of side-whiskers, each of which would have furnished enough beard for a miner, enframed this large face, marbled in violent tints; crisp shining black hair, streaked with silver threads wreathed on his head in thin

short curls, and his neck, gathered in three enormous folds at the nape, overhung the collar of his vest. In the lobes of his ears, which were raised by protruding jaws capable of crushing an ox daily, shone silver earrings as large as the disk of the moon. Such was Maitre Virgilio Falsacappa, who, with his apron turned up over the hips and knife plunged into a wooden case, resembled an executioner rather than a cook.

Next came Timberio, the porter whose gymnastic feats incident to his profession and sober habits were recompensed by a handful of half-cooked macaroni sprinkled with cacio-cavello, a slice of black bread and a glass of snow water. He was now in a relative state of emaciation, although if well-fed he certainly would have attained the *embonpoint* of Falsacappa, for his gigantic frame had been built to support an enormous weight of flesh. His costume consisted of a pair of drawers, a long coat of brown cloth and a rough sailor cloak thrown over his shoulders.

Leaning on the edge of the table was Scazziga, the driver of the caleche hired by M. Paul

d'Aspremont. He also presented a striking physiognomy; his intelligent irregular features bore an expression of naive craftiness; a smile played on his mocking lips at command, and the smoothness of his manners showed that he lived in perpetual contact with the higher class of people; his clothes, bought in second hand shops, simulated a species of livery of which he was extremely proud and which, in his opinion, placed a great social distance between himself and the savage Timberio. His conversation was intermingled with French and English words that did not always convey the meaning intended, but which none the less excited the admiration of the scullions and other kitchen servants, who were astonished at so much knowledge.

A little apart from the rest were two young girls whose features, though coarser, recalled the well-known type seen on Syracusan coins: A low brow, straight nose, somewhat thick lips, strong chin, bands of blue black hair, coiled into a mass at the back of the head, the brown neck, contracted by the custom of carrying burdens on the head, encircled by a triple

necklace of coral. Many would have overlooked or scorned these poor girls, who preserved unmixed the blood of the pure types of ancient Greece, but an artist at a first glance would have opened his sketch book and sharpened his pencils.

You have perhaps seen that painting of Murillo's in Marechal Soult's gallery, if so it will save us the trouble of describing the three or four curly heads of the little scullions who completed the group. The assembly were treating a grave question; they were discussing M. Paul d'Aspremont, the French traveler brought on the last steamer, and the kitchen was passing judgment on him.

"Follow my reasoning well," said Timberio, pausing between each phrase like a popular actor to give the audience time to weigh his words, and give its assent or raise objections, "The Leopold is an honest Tuscan ship, against which we can raise no objections, unless it is that it carries too many English heretics."

"English heretics pay liberally," interrupted Scazziga, whom the generous tips of his customers had made tolerant.

"No doubt" retorted the porter testily, "but the least a heretic can do when a Christian works for him is to reward him liberally; it lessens the humiliation."

"Carrying a *forestier* in my caleche is no humiliation to me. I am not a beast of burden as you are, Timberio."

"Was I not baptized as well as you?" cried the porter, his brow darkening, and closing his fist threateningly.

"Let Timberio speak!" expostulated the assembly in chorus, fearing this interesting dissertation would end in a quarrel.

"I admit that the weather was perfect when the Leopold entered port," resumed the soothed orator.

"We admit it," assented the *chef* with majestic condescension.

"The sea was as smooth as glass, yet an enormous wave shook Gennaro's bark so rudely that he fell into the water with two or three of his companions. Was that natural? Gennaro is as sure-footed as any sailor, and he can dance the tarentella on the cross-yard, without so much as a balancing pole."

"He had perhaps taken too much Asprino," objected Scazziga, the rationalist of the assembly.

"He had not even drunk a glass of lemonade," said Timberio, "but there was a gentleman on board the steamer who looked at him in a certain way—do you understand?"

"Oh! perfectly," exclaimed the chorus, extending the index and little finger with admirable unison.

"And that gentleman," added Timberio, "is no other than M. Paul d'Aspremont."

"The one who occupies number 3, and to whom I sent his dinner on a tray?" said the *chef*.

"Precisely," replied the youngest and prettiest of the servants. "I never saw a traveler more unsociable, disagreeable and haughty. He never notices me either by word or look, and yet all gentlemen here consider me worth a compliment."

"You deserve more than that, Gelsomina, my dear," said Timberio gallantly, "but you may consider yourself fortunate not to have attracted his attention."

"You are a great deal too superstitious," objected the skeptic Scazziga, who had become slightly Voltarian through his relations with strangers and foreigners.

"By dint of associating with heretics you will end by losing faith even in Saint Janvier," retorted Timberio.

"Because Gennaro allowed himself to fall into the water is no reason to suppose that M. d'Aspremont possesses the influence you attribute to him," continued Scazziga, stoutly defending his customer.

"Do you require more proofs? I saw him this morning at his window with his eyes fixed on a cloud no bigger than the feather that escapes from a pillow. Black vapors immediately gathered, and it rained so hard that dogs could drink standing."

But Scazziga shook his head, still unconvinced.

"Beside, the groom is no better than his master," continued Timberio, "and the monkey must have some understanding with the devil to knock me to the ground; I, who could kill him with a fillip."

"I am of Timberio's opinion," said the *chef* majestically. "The stranger eats but little; he sent back untouched the stuffed zuchettes, fried chicken and macaroni with tomato sauce, which I prepared with my own hands! What strange secret is hidden under this moderation? Why should a rich man deprive himself of dainty dishes and take nothing but egg soup and a slice of cold meat?"

"And he has red hair," said Gelsomina, passing her fingers through the black forest of her bands.

"And his eyes project slightly," continued Pepina, the other servant.

"They are too near the nose," added Timberio.

"And the wrinkle between his eyebrows is in the form of a horse-shoe," concluded the formidable Virgilio Falsacappa; "he is, therefore—"

"Don't utter the word, it is unnecessary," cried the chorus, minus Scazziga, who was still incredulous; "we shall keep ourselves on our guard."

"And to think that the police would make it

unpleasant for me," said Timberio, "if, by chance, I allowed a trunk weighing three hundred pounds to fall on the head of that *forestier* of misfortune!"

"Scazziga is very brave to convey him in his caleche," said Gelsomina.

"He can only see my back, and his gaze cannot meet mine at the required angle," replied Scazziga. "Besides, I am not afraid."

"You have no religion, Scazziga, and will end badly," said Palforio, the gigantic cook.

While this discussion was in progress in the kitchen of the Hotel de Rome, Paul, who was much annoyed by Count d'Altavilla's presence at Miss Ward's villa, had gone off for a walk to the villa Reale in a very bad humor. As he thought of his morning visit the frown came more than once into his forehead, and his eyes resumed their strange, fixed expression. Once he thought he saw Alicia going by in a carriage with the Commodore and the Count; he quickly rushed out, adjusting his eye-glasses to make sure he was not mistaken. It was not Alicia, however, but a woman who resembled her slightly at a distance. But the

horses, no doubt frightened by his sudden appearance, dashed away at a furious speed and were soon out of sight.

Paul then took an ice at the European cafe, on the *largo* of the palace; the few persons around him examined him attentively and changed their seats while, making a singular gesture.

He entered the Pulcinella theatre, where an entertainment was in progress. The actor became confused in the middle of his laughable improvisation and stopped short. He soon recovered himself, however, but in the very middle of a lazzi his black cardboard nose fell off, and he could not succeed in readjusting it. To excuse himself to his audience he made a rapid sign that explained the cause of his ill-luck; the glance Paul had fixed on him deprived him of his powers.

Paul's neighbors vanished one by one; M. d' Aspremont arose to leave, unable to explain the effect he produced, and as he passed out he heard many voices repeating the strange, unintelligible word : "A Jettatore! a Jettatore!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE day following the odd present of the pair of horns, Count Altavilla presented himself at Miss Ward's villa. The young English girl was drinking a cup of tea with her uncle, precisely as if she had been at Ramsgate in a yellow brick house, and not at Naples on a whitewashed terrace surrounded by fig trees, cactis, and aloes: for one of the characteristics of the Saxon race is the persistency of habits, however contrary to the climate. The Commodore was radiant: he had succeeded in keeping his butter in a solid state by means of ice manufactured with a chemical apparatus, for snow only is brought down from the mountains that arise behind Castellamare; and he was gazing at his sandwich in evident satisfaction.

After the few vague words that always preceed a conversation and which seem like the prelude of a pianist before playing what he intends to play, Alicia abruptly turned to the young Neapolitan count and asked:

"What signifies that odd present of horns

which accompanied your flowers? The servant, Vice, told me it was a charm against the fascino, but that is all I could draw from her."

"Vice is right," replied Count Altavilla with a bow,

"But what is a *fascino?*" insisted the young girl. I know nothing of your country's superstitions, and this is no doubt a popular belief."

"The *fascino* is the pernicious influence exercised by the person gifted, or rather afflicted with the *evil eye*," said the Count.

"I am pretending to understand because I fear to give you an unfavorable opinion of my intelligence if I admit that the meaning of your words escape me, said Alicia. "You explain the unknown by the unknown: *evil eye* is a poor translation of *fascino* for me. As that personage in the comedy said: "I know Latin, but go on as if I did not."

"I shall explain myself as clearly as possible," resumed Altavilla, "only, in your British disdain, do not take me for a savage and ask yourself if my clothes do not conceal a skin tatooed in red and blue. I am a civilized man; I was brought up in Paris, I speak English and

French; I have read Voltaire; I believe in steam engines, railways, and in two houses like Stendhal; I eat macaroni with a fork; I wear Swiss gloves in the morning, colored gloves in the afternoon and straw-colored gloves in the evening."

The Commodore, who was spreading butter on his second sandwich, was attracted by this strange prologue and stopped short, his knife in his hand, and his cold blue eyes, contrasting so oddly with his brick-red complexion, fixed on Altavilla.

"These are reassuring recommendations," said Alicia with a smile; "and I should need to be very distrustful to suspect you of barbarism after this. But what you have to say must be very terrible or very absurd that you should require so much circumlocution to reach the fact."

"Yes, very terrible, very absurd, and even very ridiculous, which is worse," continued the Count, "If I were in London or Paris, I would perhaps laugh with you, but here, at Naples—"

"You will be serious in that what you mean?"

"Precisely."

"But let us come to the *fascino*," said Alicia, impressed in spite of herself by Altavilla's gravity.

"This belief goes back to the greatest antiquity. Allusion is made to it in the Bible. Virgil speaks of it in a convinced tone; the bronze talismans found in Pompeii, Herculanum and Stabies, the preservative signs drawn on the walls of the excavated houses, all show how this *superstition* was spread in the past (Altavilla emphasized the word *superstition* with a malicious intention). The entire Orient believes in it to this day. Red or green hands are painted on Moorish dwellings to ward off the evil influence. There is a carved hand on the key-stone of the Door of Judgment at the Alhambra, which proves that this superstition is very ancient at least, if not well founded. When millions of men have shared an opinion for thousands of years, it is probable that this opinion so generally received is supported by positive facts, by a long series of observations justified by events. It is difficult to believe that so many persons, many of whom were il-

lustrous, enlightened and learned men, should have been deceived in a thing which I alone—whatever high opinion I should have of myself—should see clearly."

"Your arguments are easily refuted," interrupted Miss Ward. "Was not polytheism the religion of Hesiodus, Homer, Aristotele, Plato, even of Socrates, who sacrificed a cock to Esculapius, and of innumerable other personages of undeniable genius."

"Undoubtedly; but no one now-a-days sacrifices bullocks to Jupiter."

"They are now put to a much better use by being cut up into beafsteaks and roasts," said the Commodore sententiously, the custom of burning victims on coals having always shocked him in Homer.

"We no longer sacrifice doves to Venus, or peacocks to Juno, or stags to Bacchus," resumed Altavilla. "Christianity has replaced the white marble dreams with which Greece peopled its Olympus, error has vanished before truth, and yet an infinity of people still fear the effects of the fascino or the jettaturo, as it is usually called."

"I can understand how ignorant persons may be troubled by such influences," replied Alicia, "but I am astonished that a man of your birth and education should share the belief."

It is no more astonishing than to see a strong-minded person hang a horn beneath his window, nail a horse shoe above his door, and never venture out unless covered with talismans," rejoined the Count. "I am frank, and admit without a blush that when I meet a Jettatore I cross the street, and if I cannot avoid his gaze, I exorcise it as best I can with the consecrated gesture. I make no more ado about it than would a lazzarone and I find it an excellent plan. Innumerable mishaps have taught me not to scorn these precautions."

Miss Ward possessed a philosophical mind which had never known restraint. She admitted nothing until after thorough examination, and her reason rejected all that could not be explained mathematically. The Count's words astonished her; at first she believed that he must be jesting, but the calm, convinced tone in which he spoke caused her to change her opinion, though it failed to persuade her.

"I admit," she said, "that this prejudice exists, that it is wide-spread, that you are sincere in your fear of the evil-eye, and that you are not trying to take advantage of the simplicity of a stranger; but give me some physical reason for this superstitious idea; for I am very incredulous; the fantastic, the mysterious, the occult, the inexplicable, have but little influence upon me."

"You will not deny the power of the human eye, Miss Alicia," rejoined the Count, "in it the light of heaven is combined with the reflection of the soul. The pupil is a lens that concentrates the rays of life, and the intellectual electricity gushes out through this narrow opening. Does not the glance of a woman penetrate the hardest heart? Does not the glance of a hero reanimate a whole army? Does not the glance of the physician subdue the madman? Does not the glance of a mother make the lion shrink back?"

"You plead your cause with eloquence," said Alicia shaking her pretty head; "forgive me if I still have doubts."

"Does not a bird obey a foreboding, when

palpitating with terror and uttering pitiful shrieks, it comes down from the branch, from which it might have easily flown, to throw itself into the jaws of the serpent that fascinates it? Has it heard its mates babbling jettatura stories in the nest? Have not many effects been produced by causes inappreciable to our organs? Is the miasma of the fever pest, or cholera visible? No eye detects the electric fluid on the point of the lightning rod, and yet the lightning is attracted! What is there absurd in the supposition that a propitious or fatal ray may be emitted from this black, blue, or gray disk? Why should not this effluvium be lucky or unlucky according to the way of emission or the angle under which the object received it?"

'It seems to me," said the Commodore, "that there is some truth in the Count's theory; I have never been able to look into the golden eyes of a toad without feeling an intolerable warmth in my stomach, as if I had taken an emetic; and yet the poor reptile has more reason to fear than I, who could crush him with my foot."

"Ah! uncle!" cried Alacia, "if you side with M. d'Altavilla, I shall be beaten. I am not strong enough to struggle. Although I may find many objections against this ocular electricity which no physician mentions I am willing to admit its existence for an instant, but what efficacy can those immense horns you presented me have in preserving us from their unhappy effects?"

"As the lightning rod attracts the lightning with its points," replied Altavilla, "so the sharp points of these horns attract the eye of the jettatore, turn aside the malignant fluid, and destroy its dangerous electricity. The same may be accomplished by extending the fingers forward and wearing coral talismans."

"All you have just said is very foolish, Monsieur Le Comte," said Alicia, "and this is what I understand from your words. According to you I am under the influence of the fascino from a very dangerous jettatore and you have sent me those horns as a means of defense?"

"I fear so, Miss Alicia," replied the Count in a tone of profound conviction.

"Indeed!" cried the Commodore, "I should like to see one of those squinty-eyed rascals trying to fascinate my niece! Although I am past sixty, I have not yet forgotten my boxing lessons."

And he closed his fist, pressing his thumb against his bent fingers.

"Two fingers suffice," said Altavilla, taking the Commodore's hand and placing his fingers in the required position. "Usually, the jettatura is involuntary; it is exercised without the knowledge of those who posses this fatal gift, and when the jettatore do become conscious of their evil power, they often deplore the effects even more than anybody else. We must therefore avoid them and not ill-treat them. Besides, with the horns, the extended fingers, and the double branch of coral, we can neutralize, or at least attenuate their influence."

"Indeed, it is very strange," said the Commodore, impressed in spite of himself by the Count's words.

"I was not aware that I was under the influence of a jettatore," said the young girl, whose curiosity was awakened, although she was still

incredulous; "I never leave this terrace except to take a drive to the villa Reale in the evening with my uncle, and I have never remarked any that could give rise to your supposition. On whom does your suspicion rest?"

"It is not suspicion, Miss Ward; it is certainty," replied the young Neapolitan count.

"In mercy, then, reveal the name of this fatal being!" exclaimed Miss Ward, with a slight shade of mockery.

Altavilla remained silent.

"It is always good to know of whom you should beware," added the Commodore.

The young man seemed buried in thought for a few moments, then he arose suddenly, walked up to Miss Ward's uncle, and, bowing respectfully, said:

"My lord Ward, I beg you to honor me with your niece's hand."

At this unexpected speech Alicia blushed, and the Commodore turned from red to scarlet.

Count Altavilla was certainly in a position to aspire to Miss Ward's hand; he belonged to one of the oldest and most noble families of

Naples. He was young, handsome, rich, stood well in royal circles, and was of irreproachable elegance. His proposal, therefore, had nothing shocking in itself, but it came in such a strange and sudden manner, and seemed to have so little to do with the previous conversation, that the stupefaction and amazement of the Commodore and his niece were only natural. Altavilla, however, was neither surprised nor alarmed, and awaited his answer with perfect composure.

"My dear Count," said the Commodore at last when he had recovered his self-possession, "your proposal astonishes me as much as it honors me. The truth is, I know not what to say; I have not consulted my niece. We were speaking of fascino, jettatura, horns, talismans, open or closed hands—in fact, of all sorts of things that have nothing to do with marriage—and you suddenly ask me for Alicia's hand! It is really astonishing, and I hope you will not be angry with me if my ideas are not quite clear on the subject. This union would certainly be very suitable, but I believed my niece had other intentions. It is true that an

old sea-dog like myself cannot always read the heart of a young girl."

Seeing that her uncle was becoming confused, Alicia took advantage of this pause to cut short a scene that was becoming embarrassing, and said:

"Count, when a gentleman asks loyally for the hand of a young girl, she can find no cause to be offended, but she has the right to be astonished at the odd form of his proposal. I was urging you to tell me the name of the pretended jettatore, whose influence, according to you, may injure me, and you suddenly turn to my uncle and make a proposition, the motive of which I can not understand or elucidate."

"It is because a gentleman cannot willingly become a denunciator," replied Altavilla, "and a husband alone can defend his wife. But take a few days for reflection. Until then, the horns exposed in a very visible way, will, I hope, suffice to protect you from any unhappy event."

As he said these last words the count arose and, bowing profoundly, walked away.

Vice, the dark servant with crimpy hair, was

slowly ascending the steps that led to the terrace, carrying the afternoon tea, and heard the last words of the conversation. She nourished against Paul d'Aspremont all the aversion that a peasant of Abruzzo, scarcely tamed by two or three years of servile work, can conceive against a *forestiere* suspected of jettatura; besides, she found the Count elegant and handsome, and could not understand how Miss Ward conld prefer a pale delicate young man, whom she, Vice, would not accept even if he were not a jettatura. Moreover, she did not appreciate the delicacy of the Count's proceedings, and was anxious to save her beloved mistress from a pernicious influence; so bending until she could reach Alicia's ear she whispered:

"I know the name Count Altavilla refuses to reveal."

"I forbid you to utter it, Vice," cried Alicia. "Indeed all these superstitions are shameful, and I will brave them like a Christian who fears God only."

CHAPTER VII.

"JETTATORE! Jettatore! Those words were really addressed to me," said Paul d'Aspremont to himself as he thoughtfully walked back to the hotel. "I do not know their meaning, but they most assuredly signify something injurious or malicious. What is there singular, remarkable, or ridiculous in my person that I should this attract unfavorable attention? Although one is never a good judge of himself, it seems to me that I am neither handsome nor plain, tall nor short, fat nor thin, and I might pass unnoticed in a crowd. My clothes are not eccentric; I do not wear a turban illuminated with tapers like M. Jourdain in the Comedy of the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme;* neither do I wear a vest with a golden sun embroidered in the back. I am not preceded by a negro playing on timbals; my individuality, which is perfectly unknown in Naples, is concealed under the usual clothing, the domino of modern civilization, and I am in all like the rest of the elegant young men who walk on

the Rue de Tolede or the Largo of the Palace, excepting a little less cravat, a little less scarf pin, a little less embroidered shirt, a little less coat, a little less gold chain, and a great deal less frizzes."

"Perhaps this is it, I am not curled enough. To morrow I shall put myself in the hands of the hotel hair-dresser. Yet, the people here are accustomed to strangers, and a little difference in dress is not sufficient to justify the mysterious word and strange gesture that my presence incites. Besides, I have remarked an expression of mixed antipathy and horror in the eyes of the people who avoid me. What can I have done to these persons whom I meet for the first time? A traveler, a shadow that passes on never to return, excites indifference only, unless he comes from some remote region and is a specimen of any unknown race, but the steamers bring, every week thousands of tourists from whom I differ in nothing. No one cares, except the facchini, the hotel-keepers, and the porters! I have not killed my brother since I had none, and I cannot bear the mark of Cain; and yet everybody becomes troubled

and walks away at my approach. I never produced that effect in Paris, London, Vienna, or any of the other cities I visited, I was for some time considered proud and haughty, and was told that I affected the English accent, but I received the attentions due a gentleman every where, and my advances, although rare, were none the less appreciated. A sea voyage of three days from Marseilles to Naples cannot have changed me to the point of being odious or grotesque. I, who more than one woman has honored by her friendship and who has won the heart of Miss Alica Ward, a delicious young girl, a heavenly creature, an angel of Thomas Moore's!"

These sensible reflections calmed Paul d' Aspremont's agitated mind and he persuaded himself that he had attached too much importance to the exaggerated notions of the Neapolitans, who are the greatest gesticulators in the world, and had given them a meaning which did not exist.

It was late. All travelers with the exception of Paul had retired to their respective chambers. Gelsomina, the pretty servant whose

features we have sketched during the council held in the kitchen, under the presidency of Virgilio Falsacappa, was awaiting Paul's arrival to bolt the door. It was Nanella's turn to watch the door but she had begged her companion, who was more brave, to replace her, as she was afraid to meet this *forestiere* suspected of jettatura.

Gelsomina was literally covered with charms. An enormous bunch bristled on her breast, and five small coral horns replaced the bangles that usually hung from the pearls in her ear-rings. Her thumbs and fingers were bent with the exception of the index and little fingers, which were extended with a precision that would have been most assuredly approved by the Reverend Andrea de Jorio, author of the *Mimica degli antichi investigata nel gestire napolitano.*

Concealing her hand in the folds of her skirt, the brave Gelsomina handed a candle to M. Paul d'Aspremont, at the same time fixing a sharp, persistent, almost challenging glance on him. The expression of that glance was so singular that the young man lowered

his eyes, and this action on his part seemed to please the pretty girl very much.

Straight and motionless, her arm extended like a statue offering the taper, her profile clearly defined by a luminous line, her eyes fixed and blazing, she seemed like a Nemesis trying to confound the guilty.

When the traveler had ascended the stairs and the sound of his footsteps had died out in the silent hall, Gelsomina raised her head with an air of triumph and muttered:

"Ah! the wretch! May Saint Janvier confound him! I made his glance shrink back properly into his pupils; I am sure nothing unfortunate will befall me."

Paul d'Aspremont passed a restless night and slept badly. He was tormented by all sorts of strange dreams evoked by the thoughts that had preoccupied him during the day. He saw himself surrounded by hideous and grimacing figures, expressing hatred, anger and fear. Then these figures vanished, and long, thin, bony fingers, with knotty joints, emerged from the darkness, enveloped in a reddish, infernal light, and menaced him by

making cabalistic signs. The nails of these fingers, curved like tigers' claws and vultures talons, approached nearer and nearer to his face and seemed as if trying to dig out his eyes. By a supreme effort he succeeded in driving back these hands that flew on the wings of bats; but these crooked hands were succeeded by furious bulls, buffaloes, and stags with whitened skulls, who attacked him with their horns and antlers, forcing him into the sea, where he tore his body on a forest of pointed or bifurcated coral branches. A wave dashed him back on shore, bruised, crushed, half dead; and, like Lord Byron's "Don Juan," in his swoon he caught a glimpse of a charming head bending over him. It was not Haidee, but Alicia, even more beautiful than the imaginary being created by the poet. The young girl was making vain efforts to draw back on the sands the body that the sea strove to tear from her grasp and begged Vice, the dark servant, to come to her assistance; but she refused with a cruel ferocious laugh. Alicia's arms at last be-

came weary and Paul fell back into the abyss.

These confusedly frightful, vaguely horrible phantasmagorias and others still more confusing, recalling the shapeless specters evoked from the opaque shadows of the aquarium of Goya, tortured the sleeper until the first streaks of dawn. His soul, emancipated by the unconsciousness of his body, seemed to guess what his awakened thought could not understand, and to strive to interpret his presentiments by images in the dark chamber of dreams.

Paul arose unrefreshed, uneasy, as if put on the trace of a secret misfortune by these nightmares, of which he feared to probe the mystery. Never had he felt so sad; he even doubted Alicia. The conceited, happy expression of the young Neapolitan Count, the complacency with which the young girl listened to him, the approving look of the Commodore, all these returned to his memory, embellished by a thousand cruel details, drowning his heart in bitterness and adding still to his melancholy.

Daylight has the happy privilege of dissipating the uneasiness caused by nocturnal visions. Smarra flies away in anger, agitating his membranous wings, when daylight shoots its golden arrows into the room through the interstices of the curtains.

The sun shone with joyous brightness, the sky was pure, and the blue sea sparkled with myriads of spangles in the sunlight. Little by little Paul grew more calm and reassured. He forgot his painful dreams and the strange impressions of the previous day; or, if he thought of them at all, it was only to accuse himself of foolishness.

He went to Chiaja to amuse himself by hearing the saucy Neopolitan. The merchants stood on queer looking benches crying out and advertising their wares in the popular dialect—unintelligible to Paul, who understood Italian only—with wild gestures and a violence of action unknown in the North. But whenever he stopped near a shop the merchant looked alarmed, muttered some unintelligible imprecation, and extended his fingers as if to stab him with the index and little finger; and the

women, more bold, overwhelmed him with reproaches and shook their fists at him.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON hearing these abuses from the mob of Chiaja, M. Paul d'Aspremont at first believed himself to be the object of those vulgar and ridiculous litanies with which fishmongers entertain well-dressed people who go through the market place. But the look of repulsion and fear in their eyes was so deep and real that he perforce renounced this interpretation. Again the word "*Jettatore*," which had struck his ear at the theater San Carlino, was hurled at him, and this time it was uttered in a menacing tone and with violent expression. He walked away slowly with downcast eyes, no longer daring to fix his gaze—the cause of so much trouble—on any object.

As he walked along close to the walls, endeavoring to escape public notice, his attention was attracted by a display of old books at a second hand shop. He stopped and opened a few books to give himself time to recover his composure. With his back half turned and his face nearly concealed in the

pages, he thus avoided all chance of insult. For an instant he had thought of charging the mob with his cane; but the vague superstitious terror that was beginning to invade him held him back. He remembered having once struck an insolent coachman with a light walking stick, and the blow had fallen on his temple, killing him on the spot. It was an involuntary murder, but he had never ceased to grieve over it. He had taken up several volumes at hazard and replaced them in their case, when he picked up a treatise on the "*Jettatura*," by Signor Niccolo Valetta. The title burned before his eyes like characters of fire; and to his excited mind the book seemed placed there by the hand of fatality. He threw the price of the volume, six or eight *carlins*, to the old book-worm, who stood gazing at him with a cunning look, as he toyed with two or three black horns attached to his chain, and hurried back to the hotel. Once there, he carefully locked himself in his room and hastened to open the book, which was to enlighten him and settle the doubts that had invaded his mind since his arrival at Naples.

Signor Valetta's book is as well known and wide spread in Naples as the *Secrets* of the Great Albert *l'Etteila* or the *Key to dreams* in Paris. Valetta defines the Jettatura, teaches by what signs it may be known, and by what means we may be preserved from it. He divides the Jettatore into many classes, according to the degree of evil of which they are capable, and touches on all questions that relate to this grave matter.

Had Paul d'Aspremont found this book in Paris, he would merely have turned its pages and carelessly glanced at them as he would an old almanac filled with ridiculous stories, and would have been amused at the seriousness with which the author treated this nonsense. But in his present disposition of mind, far from his ordinary surroundings, prepared to credulity by an infinity of small incidents, he read its pages, with a secret horror, like an uninitiated being, spelling out spirit evocations and cabalistic formula. Although he did not try to penetrate them, the secrets of hell revealed themselves to him. Struggle as he would, he could no longer drive away the truth

from him. He was now conscious of his fatal power, he was a Jettatore! He was forced to admit it to himself; he possessed all the distinctive signs described by Valetta.

It sometimes happens that a man, who until that moment has believed himself endowed with perfect health, opens a medical work either by hazard or for distraction, and, as he reads the pathological description of a disease, the knowledge comes to him that he is its victim. Enlightened by a fatal light, as each symptom is described, he feels some obscure organ throbbing painfully; some hidden fiber, the existence of which he had not even suspected until then, quivers in response; and his cheeks pale as he realizes that death, which he had thought so far away, is fast approaching. Paul experienced an analogous effect.

He placed himself before the glass and scrutinized his face with frightful intensity. That incongruous beauty, composed of perfections not usually found together, made him resemble more than ever, the fallen Archangel, and reflected sinisterly from the depth of the mirror. The fibrils in the pupils writhed like

convulsive vipers; his eye brows quivered like the bow from which the fatal arrow has just escaped; the white furrow in his brow resembled the cicatrice of a thunderbolt; and his glossy hair seemed to burn with infernal flame. And the marble paleness of the skin gave still more relief to each feature of this truly terrible physiognomy.

Paul began to fear himself. It seemed to him that the appearance of his eyes reflected by the mirror, rebounded on him like poisoned stings. Imagine Medusa examining her horrible and charming head in the yellow reflections of a brass shield.

Our readers may say that it is difficult to believe that a young man of the world, imbued with modern science, who had lived in the midst of the scepticism of civilization, could take a popular prejudice into serious consideration and imagine himself fatally gifted with a mysterious evil power. But to this we will answer that there exists an irresistible magnetism in a thought that is general, which penetrates you in spite of yourself, and against which the will cannot always struggle successfully. Many on

their arrival in Naples scorn and ridicule the jettatura, but end by covering themselves with horny preservatives and flying in terror from any individual with a suspicious-looking eye.

Paul d'Aspremont found himself in a still more grave position; he was himself a jettatore —and everybody avoided him, or made the preservative signs recommended by Signor Valetta in his presence. Although his reason rebelled against the thought, he could not help recognizing the fact that he possessed all the indications that betray the fascino.

The human mind—even the most enlightened —always retains a dark corner, wherein the hideous chimeras of credulity crouch, or the vampires of superstition hover. Ordinary life itself is so full of insoluble problems, that the impossible becomes probable. We may believe or deny all; from a certain point of view, the dream exists as much as the reality.

Paul felt himself invaded by a deep sadness. He was a monster! Although endowed with the most affectionate instincts, and the most generous nature and kind-heartedness, he carried misfortune with him. His glance, invol-

untarily charged with venom, injured those on whom it rested, although his intentions were of the best. He possessed the terrible privilege of uniting, concentrating, and distilling morbid miasmas, dangerous electricities, and all the fatal influences of the atmosphere to scatter them around his path.

Many circumstances in his life which until then had seemed obscure, and for which he had vaguely accused hazard, were now made clear by a livid light. He recalled all sorts of enigmatical mishaps, unexplained misfortunes, catastrophes without motives, of which he now held the key. Many odd coincidences now established themselves in his mind, confirming the sad opinion he had reached concerning himself.

He recalled his life year by year. He remembered that his mother had died in giving him birth, the sad end of his little school friends, the most beloved of whom had been killed in falling from a tree as Paul stood watching him climbing up the branches; that boating excursion, so joyously commenced with two companions, and from which he had

returned alone, after vain efforts to tear from the weeds the bodies of the poor children drowned by the capsizing of the boat; the pass-at-arms in which his foil, broken near the button, and thus transformed into a sword, had dangerously wounded his adversary—a young man whom he loved very much. All this could certainly be explained rationally, and Paul had done so until a few hours previous; but all that was accidental or fortuitous in these events appeared to depend on another cause since his perusal of Signor Valetta's work. The fatal influence, the fascino, the jettatura must have had its part in these catastrophies. Such a continuity of misfortunes around the same personage was not natural.

Another more recent circumstance returned to his mind with all its horrible details, and contributed not a little to confirm him in his sad belief.

He often visited the Queen's Theatre, in London, where he had been particularly struck with the gracefulness of a young English dancing girl. He admired her as he would a pretty figure in a painting or engraving, and his eyes

always followed her in the midst of her ballet companions, through the whirlwind of rapid manœuvres. He loved to see that sweet, melancholy face, that delicate paleness which the animation of the dance never flushed ; the beautiful silky, blonde hair, crowned with stars of flowers; that deep gaze lost into space; those shoulders of virginal chastity, shuddering under the opera glass; those limbs that regretfully raised their cloud of gauze, and glistened under their silky covering like the marble of a statue. Whenever she came near the foot-lights he bowed, made some little sign of furtive admiration, or raised his opera glass to obtain a better view of her.

One night the dancer, carried away by the rapid movement of the music, came near that dazzling line of fire that separates the real from the ideal world in the theatre, her light fairy-like draperies fluttering like the wings of a dove ready to take flight, a gas jet draws its blue and white tongue and lapped the airy stuff. In an instant the young girl was enveloped in flames; for a few seconds she danced like a will-o'the-wisp surrounded by a red light, and

then rushed out frantic with terror, devoured by the flames of her garments.

Paul had been deeply grieved by this tragedy, of which the journals of the day spoke at length, and where the name of the victim and details may be found by those who are curious to read them. But his grief was not mingled with remorse; he attributed himself no share in the accident which he deplored more than any one else.

He was now persuaded that his obstinacy in following her with his glance had brought death to this charming girl. He considered himself as her assassin. He felt a horror of himself and wished that he had never been born.

To this prostration, however, succeeded a violent reaction. He began to laugh nervously and dashed down Valetta's book, exclaiming impatiently:

"Really, I am becoming imbecile or mad! The sun of Naples must have effected my head. What would my club companions say, if they knew that I had seriously troubled my conscience with this fine question—whether or no I am a Jettatore!"

Paddy knocked discreetly on the door—Paul opened it, and the groom presented him a letter from Alicia on the glazed leather of his cap, excusing himself for not having a silver tray.

Paul d'Aspremont broke the seal and read the following:

"Are you angry with me, Paul?—You did not come last night, and your lemon sherbet melted dismally away on the table. I strained my ears in vain until nine o'clock, trying to distinguish the rumbling of your carriage through the obstinate song of the cricket and the roaring of the tabret. Then I perforce lost all hope and quarreled with the Commodore—admire the justice of woman!—Don Limon, donna Pangrazia, and Pulcinella with her black nose, must possess a great charm for you? For I learned through my police that you spent your evening at San Carlino. You did not write a single one of those pretended important letters. Why not admit simply and stupidly that you are jealous of Count Altavilla? I believed you possessed more vanity, and this modesty on your part touches me. Have no fear, M. d'Altavilla is too handsome, and I do not fancy

Apollos. I would effect a superb indifference in regard to you and say that I did not notice your absence, but the truth is that I found the time very long; that I was in very bad humor, very nervous, and that I nearly boxed Vice's ears because she was laughing like an imbecile—I cannot imagine why.

"A. W."

This cheerful and bantering letter brought Paul's mind back to a sense of real life. He dressed, ordered the carriage, and a few minutes later the Voltairian, Scazziga, was flourishing his whip around the ears of his animals who rushed galloping on the lava pavement, through the ever compact crowd on the quay of Santa Lucia.

"Scazziga! what spirit spurs you on? You will cause some accident!" cried M. d'Aspremont in alarm.

The driver turned quickly to reply, and he met Paul's irritated glance. A stone he had failed to see raised one of the front wheels, and the shock threw him from his seat, without, however, releasing the reins. With the agility of a monkey, he jumped back to his place, but

a lump the size of an egg stood out on his forehead.

"May the devil take me if I turn again when you talk to me!" he growled between his teeth. "Timberio, Falsacappa and Gelsomina were right; he is a Jettatore! To-morrow I shall buy a pair of horns. If they do no good, they can do no harm."

This little incident produced a disagreeable impression on Paul. It brought him back into the magical circle from which he was trying to escape. A stone is every day found under the wheels of a carriage, and an awkward coachman is in consequence thrown from his seat. Nothing is more simple or commonplace. The *effect*, however, had followed the *cause* so closely, Scazziga's fall coincided so precisely with his irritated glance, that Paul's apprehensions returned.

"I am half inclined to leave this superstitious country this very day," he said to himself. "I feel my brain tossing in my skull, like a dry hazel-nut in its shell. But if I confided my fears to Miss Ward, she would only laugh, and beside, the climate of Naples is favorable to

her health—her health—but she was well before meeting me! Never had that swan's nest rocked on the waters, and which we call England, produced a child more rosy and fair! Life shone in her bright sparkling eyes and bloomed on her fresh satiny cheeks. A rich and pure blood coursed through the blue veins under the transparent skin; and one felt a graceful strength in her dazzling beauty! How pale and thin she became under my gaze; how emaciated were her delicate hands. Dark shadows encircled her bright eyes, as if consumption had placed his bony fingers on her bright colors; her breath comes freely from those lungs which the physician sounded in alarm. Delivered from my woeful influence, she would enjoy long years of life. Is it not I who am killing her? The other evening when I was there, did she not experinece a pain so sharp that her cheeks became as livid as if fanned by the cold breath of death? Do I not effect her with the Jettatura against my will?—But after all there may be nothing unnatural in it at all. Many young English girls are predisposed to lung troubles."

These thoughts occupied Paul's mind until he reached the villa. When he presented himself on the terrace, where Miss Ward and the Commodore were usually to be found, the first thing that met his eyes was Count Altavilla's gift, the enormous Sicilian horns with their marbled crescent curving in the most conspicuous place.

Seeing that Paul remarked them, the Commodore turned purple—this being his way of blushing—for, less delicate than his niece, he had received Vice's confidences.

Alicia, with a gesture of perfect disdain, motioned the servant to carry them away, and fixed her beautiful eyes on Paul with an expression full of love, courage and faith.

"Don't take them away," said Paul to Vice, "they are very beautiful."

CHAPTER IX.

PAUL'S observation on Count Altavilla's gift seemed to please the commodore; Vice smiled, showing two rows of sharp-pointed teeth that shone with a ferocious whiteness; and Alicia, in a rapid glance, seemed to ask her friend a question which remained without answer.

An embarrassing silence fell on the group.

The first few minutes of a visit, even though cordial, familiar, expected, and renewed every day, are usually embarrassing. During the absence, even when it has lasted but a few hours, there has arisen an invisible atmosphere which chills all effusion. It is like a perfectly transparent glass through which we see the landscape, but which even the fly cannot penetrate. There is nothing apparent to the eye, and yet we feel the obstacle.

A hidden thought, dissimulated under a polite reserve, preoccupied at the same time the three personages of this ordinarily friendly and cheerful group. The Commodore twisted

his thumbs mechanically; Paul d'Aspremont kept his eyes obstinately fixed on the black polished points of the horns he had forbidden Vice to carry away, as if he were a naturalist trying to classify an unknown species by examining a specimen; and Alicia toyed with the rosette of the ribbon that encircled her waist, making a pretense of tightening the knot.

Miss Ward was the first to break the ice, with that playful freedom that belongs to the young English girl, who is nevertheless always so reserved and modest after marriage.

"Really Paul," she said, "you are not very amiable this evening. Is your gallantry a cold atmosphere plant which can only expand in England, and whose development is restrained by the hot temperature of this climate? How attentive, zealous and devoted you were in our Lincolnshire cottage! You always approached me with your heart on your lips, your hand on your breast, irreproachably curled, ready to bend the knee before the idol of your soul; such, in fact, as lovers are pictured in novels."

"I love you still, Alicia," said Paul tenderly, without moving his eyes from the horns sus-

pended to one of the antique columns that supported the vine ceiling.

"You say it in so lugubrious a tone that I should have to be a great coquette to believe you," retorted Alicia. "I suppose that what pleased you in me was my pale complexion. my diaphaneity, my vaporous and shadowy grace; in a word my position as an invalid gave me a certain romantic charm which I have lost."

"Alicia! you were never more beautiful!" cried Paul.

"Words, words, words, as Shakespeare says, I am so beautiful that you will not condescend to look at me."

In fact, Paul d' Aspremout had not once turned his eyes toward the young girl.

"Come," she continued with a sigh comically exaggerated. "I see that I must have become a strong and stout peasant girl, very fresh, highly colored, without the least distinction, incapable of figuring at the Almacks ball, or in a book of beauties, separated from a sonnet of admiration by a sheet of tissue paper."

"Miss Ward, you take pleasure in calumniating yourself," said Paul with lowered eyelids.

"You might as well admit frankly that I am frightful—Commodore, it is all your fault; with your chicken wings, your cutlets and tenderloins, your small glasses of Canary wine, your horse-back rides, your sea baths and your gymnastic exercises; you have built up that fatal commonplace health which dissipates M. d'Aspremont's poetic illusions."

"You are teasing M. d'Aspremont and laughing at me," said the amazed Commodore; "but tenderloin is certainly substantial and Canary wine has never been known to injure anyone."

"What disappointment my poor Paul! to leave an elf, a sprite, a hobgobblin, and find what parents and physicians call a well constituted young person! But listen—since you have not the courage to look me in the face—and shudder with horror—I weigh seven ounces more than on my departure from England!"

"Eight ounces!" proudly interrupted the Commodore, who nursed Alicia as tenderly as a mother.

"Is it precisely eight ounces? Oh! you terrible uncle, you will disenchant M. d'Aspre-

mont entirely!" cried Alicia affecting profound discouragement.

While the young girl challenged him by coquetries she would not have resorted to, even with her fiance, without grave motives, Paul d'Aspremont, a prey to a fixed idea and unwilling to injure Alicia by his fatal gaze, kept his eyes fixed to the magical horns, or allowed them to wonder vaguely over the immense blue expanse of water visible from the terrace.

He was asking himself if it was not his duty to fly from Alicia, even though he passed for a man without faith and without honor, and end his days in some desert island, where his jettatura would perforce die out for want of a human glance to absorbe it.

"I know what makes you so serious and gloomy," continued Alicia jestingly; "the date of our marriage is fixed for one month from now; and you shrink from the idea of becoming the husband of a poor country girl without the least elegance. I release you; you may marry my friend, Miss Sarah Templeton, who eats pickles and drinks vinegar to become thin."

She laughed, that clear, silvery laugh of

youth, and the Commodore and Paul joined in her merriment.

When the last peal of her nervous gaiety had died out, she came to Paul, took his hand. and drew him toward the piano placed at the angle of the terrace.

"My friend," she said, as she opened a music book and placed it on the stand, "you are not in a conversational mood to-day and what is not worth saying may be sung, you will therefore do your best in this *duettino*. The accompaniment is not difficult, they are nearly all common chords."

Paul seated himself at the piano, Alicia standing by his side that she might follow the score. The Commodore threw his head back, stretched his limbs, and took a pose of anticipating beatitude, for he had great pretentions to *dilettantisme* and vowed he adored music! But before the sixth measure was reached he invariably slept the sleep of the just. He obstinately maintained, however, notwithstanding his niece's raillery, that it was merely a state of ecstacy, although he sometimes snored—a symptom not alltogether ecstatic.

The *duettino* was a light and lively melody, of the Cimarosa kind with words by Metastase and we could not better describe it than by comparing it to a butterfly dancing through a sunbeam.

Music has the power of driving away evil spirits. In a few moments Paul forgot exercising fingers, magic horns, and coral charms. He had forgotten Signor Valletta's book and all the reverses of jettatura. His soul ascended gaily with Alicia's voice, into a pure and bright atmosphere.

The grass-hoppers hushed to listen, and the sea-breeze which had just arisen, carried away the notes with the petals of the flowers that had fallen from the vases to the edge of the terrace.

"Uncle sleeps as soundly as the seven sleepers in their cave. If it were not habitual with him, we might be wounded in our vanity as virtuosos," observed Alicia as she closed the music book. "Will you come to the garden with me Paul, while he is resting? You have not seen my paradise."

As she spoke she took a large Florence

straw hat that hung on a nail on one of the columns.

Alicia professed the most fantastic principles in regard to horticulture. She would neither have a flower plucked, nor a branch cut; and what had most charmed her in this villa, was the wild uncultured state of the garden.

The two young people made their way through the thick branches, that immediately rejoined after their passage. Alicia walked ahead, langhing merrily to see Paul lashed by the laurel branches she displaced. They had scarcely gone twenty paces when one of the green boughs caught up her hat and, as if through mischievousness, held it so far above them that Paul was unable to reach it.

Fortunately the foliage was so thick that the sun scarcely penetrated through the interstices of the branches, only dotting the sand here and there with a few golden sequins.

"This is my favorite retreat." said Alicia, pointing to a picturesque fragment of rock, shaded by a thicket of orange trees, mastichs and myrtles.

She seated herself on this stone, and

motioned to Paul to kneel before her on the thick carpet of dry moss at her feet.

"Place your two hands in mine and look me straight in the face," she said. "In one month I shall be your wife. But why do your eyes avoid mine?"

Paul had returned to his thoughts of Jettatura, and was avoiding her gaze.

"Do you fear to read a contrary or guilty thought?" she continued. "You know that my heart is yours since the day you brought that letter of introduction to us in Richmond. I belong to that loving, romantic and proud English race in which one moment will implant a love that will last as long as life—longer than life perhaps—and they who know how to love know how to die. Look straight into my eyes, I wish it; do not lower your eyelids, do not turn away, or I shall think that a gentleman who should fear but God has allowed himself to be frightened by vile superstitions. Fix on me that eye you believe so terrible, and which is so sweet to me, for in it I read your love, and judge if you still find me pretty

enough to drive me through Hyde Park in an open carriage after our marriage."

Paul, conquered, fixed on Alicia a gaze full of love and enthusiasm. Suddenly the young girl turned pale, a sharp pain pierced her heart like the point of an arrow; it seemed as if something had burst within her breast and she quickly raised her handkerchief to her lips. A red drop stained the fine cambric which Alicia quickly replaced in her pocket, saying:

"Oh! thank you Paul; you have made me very happy. I feared you loved me no longer."

CHAPTER X.

Notwithstanding Alicia's haste in concealing her handkerchief, the blood stain did not escape Paul d'Aspremont's eye. A frightful pallor overspread his features, an irrefutable proof of his fatal power had been given him and the most sinister ideas crossed his brain. For a moment the thought of suicide presented itself to him. Was it not his duty to suppress and destroy, as if it were an evil being, the involuntary cause of so much misfortune? For himself he would have accepted the hardest trials and borne courageously the weight of life; but to give death to the one he loved most on earth! The horrible thought almost drove him mad.

The heroic young girl had dominated the sensation of pain caused by Paul's glance and which coincided so strangely with Count d'Altavilla's words of warning. A weaker mind might have been struck by this result, which, if not supernatural, was at least difficult to explain; but, as we have said, Alicia's soul

was religious and not superstitious. Her firm faith in what should be believed rejected all these stories of mysterious influences as nursery tales and scorned the most deeply rooted prejudices. Moreover, even had she admitted the jettatura as real and recognized the evident signs in Paul, her proud and affectionate heart would not have hesitated a second. Paul had committed no action which even the most delicate susceptibility could reprove, and Alicia would have preferred to have fallen dead under this so-called fatal glance, than to recoil from a love accepted by her and sanctioned by her uncle, and which was soon to be crowned by marriage. She resembled those heroines of Shakespeare, chastily bold and virginally resolute, whose sudden love is none the less pure and faithful, and whom a single moment binds forever. Her hand had pressed Paul's, and no other man in the world should ever clasp her fingers. She considered her life as chained, and her modesty rebelled at the mere idea of another man.

She therefore displayed a gaiety so real, or so well played, that it would have deceived the

most shrewd observer, and, raising Paul who was still kneeling at her feet, they wandered through the paths obstructed by flowers and uncultivated plants, until they reached a spot where the branches were less thick, and they could contemplate the sea that stretched far away like a blue dream of infinity.

This luminous serenity dispelled Paul's gloomy thoughts; Alicia leaned confidingly on the young man's arm as if she were already his wife. By this pure and silent caress, insignificant to others, decisive to her, she gave herself to him still more formally; reassuring him against his terrors, and making him understand how little weight she placed in the dangers of which she was warned. Although she had imposed silence first on Vicé, then on her uncle, and Count d'Altavilla had named no one when he had warned her to beware of evil influences, she had quickly understood that his allusions pointed to Paul d'Aspremont. The obscure words of the young Neapolitan Count could have reference to no one but the young Frenchman.

She also saw that Paul, yielding to the prev-

alent prejudice of Naples, which makes a jettatore of any one possessing a peculiar physiognomy, by an unconceivable weakness of mind believed himself a victim to the fascino, and turned his loving eyes away from her, through fear of injuring her by his glance. To overcome this dawning conviction, she had brought about the scene we have just described, but the result had been contrary to the intention, for Paul was now more firmly anchored than ever in his fatal monomania.

The two lovers returned to the terrace, where the Commodore, still under the influence of the music, was sleeping melodiously in his bamboo arm-chair. Paul took his leave, and Alicia mimicking the Neapolitan gesture of adieu, wafted him a kiss from the tips of her fingers, saying in a tenderly caressing voice:

"You will come to-morrow, Paul, will you not?"

The Commodore who was awakened by Paul's departure, was struck by the radiant, alarming, almost supernatural beauty of Alicia at this moment. The whites of her eyes seemed like burnished silver and the pupils

sparkled like black luminous stars. Her cheeks were of an ideal rose tint, of a purity and celestial ardor which no artist could ever produce on canvas; her temples, of agate transparency, were veined with a net-work of delicate blue threads, and all her flesh seemed penetrated by luminous rays, as if her soul were struggling to burst its envelope.

"How beautiful you are to-day Alicia," exclaimed the Commodore.

"You spoil me, uncle," she replied, "and if I am not the vainest little girl in the three kingdoms, it is not your fault. Fortunately I do not believe in flattery, even when disinterested."

"Beautiful, dangerously beautiful," murmured the Commodore to himself. "She reminds me of poor Nancy, her mother, who died at nineteen. Such angels cannot remain on earth; it seems as if a breath would suffice to waft them away, and as if invisible wings fluttered on their shoulders. They are too white, too rosy, too pure, too perfect. These ethereal bodies lack the red blood and grossness of life. God lends them for a few days only to this world and

hastens to call them back. That supreme beauty saddens me like an adieu."

"Well then," said Alicia gaily, as she noticed the cloud on her uncle's brow, "since I am so pretty, it is time to marry me. The veil and orange blossoms would become me."

"Marry! Are you then in such a hurry to leave your poor old uncle, Alicia?"

"I shall not leave you. Is it not understood that M. d'Aspremont and myself are to live with you? You know very well that I would not live without you."

"M. d'Aspremont! M. d'Aspremont! — The wedding is not over yet."

"Has he not your word — and mine? Sir Joshua Ward has never yet failed to keep his word."

"He has my word, it is true," replied the Commodore, evidently embarrassed.

"Have we not waited the six months enjoined by you?" said Alicia her cheeks flushing, for this conversation, made necessary by the actual state of things, shocked her sensitive delicacy.

"Oh! You have counted the months, my child. Trust to those discreet little girls."

"I love M. d'Aspremont," said the young girl gravely.

"A fine conclusion!" exclaimed Sir Joshua Ward, who imbued as he was with the ideas of Vice and d'Altavilla, was little inclined to see his adored niece married to a jettatore. "Why do you not love another?"

"I have not two hearts," said Alicia simply. "I shall have but one love, even though, like my mother, I die at nineteen."

"Die! don't say such horrible words. I beseech you?" cried the Commodore.

"Have you any fault to find with M. d'Aspremont?"

"None, assuredly."

"Has he ever acted in a dishonorable manner? Has he ever shown himself perfidious, deceitful or cowardly? Has he ever insulted a woman or feared a man? Is his escutcheon tarnished by any secret stain? Has a young girl cause to blush or lower her eyes, in taking his arm to appear before the world?"

"M. d' Aspremont is a perfect gentleman, and nothing can be said against his respectability."

"Believe me, uncle, if anything of the kind existed, I would renounce M. d' Aspremont at once and bury myself in some inaccessible retreat; but no other reason, do you understand? no other reason can make me break a sacred promise," said Alicia in a gentle but firm tone.

The Commodore twirled his thumbs, as he always did when at a loss to know what to say, and remained silent.

"Why are you so cold to Paul now," continued Alicia. "You showed so much affection for him in England, and you were inseparable in our Lincolnshire cottage. And when you pressed his hand with a pressure, strong enough to break his fingers, you repeatedly assured him that he was a worthy man, to whom you should willingly confide the happiness of a young girl."

"Yes, indeed,I loved Paul," replied the Commodore, moved by these timely recollections, "but what was obscure in the fogs of England, became clear in the sunlight of Naples."

"What do you mean?" interrupted Alicia in trembling voice, her bright colors suddenly

fading from her cheeks, leaving her as white as an alabaster statue on a tomb.

"That Paul is a jettatore."

"What! you! my uncle ! you, Sir Joshua Ward, a gentleman, a Christian, a subject of her Britannic Majesty, a retired officer of the English Navy, an enlightened and civilized being, whom one would consult on everything; you who have learning and wisdom, who read the Bible and Gospel every night, you do not fear to accuse Paul of jettatura! Oh! I did not expect that of you!"

"My dear Alicia," replied the Commodore, "I am perhaps all you say when you are not concerned; but when a danger,even imaginary, threatens you I become more superstitious than a peasant of Abruzzo, a lazzarone of the quay, an *ostricaio* of Chiaja, a servant of the Land of Labor, or even a Neapolitan count. Paul may stare at me as much as he pleases with his eyes whose visual rays cross, and I will be as calm as if I stood before the point of a sword, or the barrel of a pistol. The fascino will not bite through my tough skin, tanned by all the suns of the universe. I am

credulous only when you are concerned, my dear niece,and I admit that I feel a cold perspiration on my temples, whenever the gaze of that unfortunate young man rests on you. I know that he has no evil intentions,and that he loves you more than his life, but it seems to me that under that influence your features alter, your colors disapppear, and that you try to conceal acute sufferings. Then I am seized with the furious desire of putting out the eyes of your M. Paul d'Aspremont, with the points of the horns given by Altavilla."

"Poor dear uncle," said Alicia, softened by the warm explosion of the Commodore; "our lives are in the hands of God. There does not die a prince on his sumptuous bed, nor a sparrow in its nest under the eaves, whose hour has not sounded above. The fascino has nothing to do with it, and it is impious to believe that a glance more or less oblique can have any influence. Come, uncle," she continued assuming the term of familiar affection of the fool in *King Lear*, "you were not speaking seriously a few moments ago; your affection for me blinded your judgment. Is it not so? You would not

dare tell M. Paul d' Aspremont that you withdraw the hand of your niece, placed in his by yourself, and that you will not accept him under the pretext that he is — a jettatore."

"By Joshua! my patron, who stopped the sun," cried the Commodore, "I will tell him to his face. I do not care if I am ridiculous, absurd, disloyal even, when it is a question of your health, of your life perhaps! I pledged my word to a man, not to a jettatore. I promised? well then! I will fail in my promises; and if he does not like it, I will give him satisfaction."

And the exasperated Commodore executed a parry, unmindful of the gout that bit at his toes.

"Sir Joshua Ward, you will do nothing of the kind," said Alicia with a calm dignity.

The Commodore fell back breathless into his arm chair and remained silent.

"Well, uncle, even if this odious and stupid accusation were true, should we on that account repulse M. d'Aspremont, and make a crime of a misfortune. Have you not considered that the injury he might produce would be inde-

pendent of his will, and that there could never be a more affectionate, generous and noble soul?"

"We do not marry vampires, however good their intentions may be."

"But all this is chimerical, extravagant, and mere superstition. What is unfortunately true, is that Paul believes in this foolishness, which he takes seriously; and he is frightened, hallucinated. He believes in his fatal power, he is afraid of himself, and every little accident, which he would not have remarked formerly and of which he now believes himself the cause, confirms this conviction in him. Is it not for me, who am his wife before God and soon will be before men also,—with your blessing, my dear uncle—to calm this overexcited imagination, drive away this vain phantom, to reassure by my apparent and real security, this haggard anxiety, sister of monomania, and save through happiness this beautiful, troubled soul, this bright intellect in peril."

"You are always right, Miss Ward," said the Commodore, "and I, whom you call wise, am but an old fool. I believe Vice must be a sor-

ceress, she has turned my head with all her stories. As to the Count Altavilla, his horns and cabalistic trinkets now seem quite ridiculous to me. It was, no doubt, a stratagem planned to get rid of Paul and marry you himself."

"The Count Altavilla may be sincere in what he says," said Alicia smilingly; "you were of his opinion in regard to the jettatura only a few moments ago."

"Do not abuse the advantage you have, Miss Alicia, for I am not sufficiently recovered from my error, not to fall back into it. The best thing we can do is to leave Naples by the first steamer and return quietly to England. When Paul no longer sees the horns and antlers, the outstretched fingers, coral charms and all these diabolic machines, his imagination will become tranquilized, and even I will forget this absurdity, which almost made me break my word and commit an action unworthy of a gentleman. You will marry Paul since it is agreed. You will reserve the parlor and bedroom on the first floor in the house at Richmond for me, the octogon tower in the Lincolnshire castle, and we shall live happily together. If your health

demands a warmer climate, we can rent a country house in the vicinity of Tours, or at Cannes, where Lord Brougham owns a magnificent property, and where these damnable superstitions of the jettatura are unknown, thank God! What do you think of my plan, Alicia?"

"You have no need of my approbation, am I not the most obedient of nieces?"

"Yes, as long as I do as you wish, little rogue," said the Commodore with a smile as he arose to regain his room.

Alicia remained a few minutes longer on the terrace. But whether this scene had been too exciting for her, or that Paul really exercised over the young girl the influence feared by the Commodore, the soft breeze, blowing on her shoulders, protected only by a delicate muslin, caused her a glacial impression, and that night she begged Vice to spread one of the Venitian coverings over her feet, which were as cold and white as marble.

Nevertheless, the fire-fly flittered on the sward, the cricket chirped, and the large yellow moon swam in the sky through a warm mist.

CHAPTER XI.

THE morning following this scene, Alicia, who had spent a bad night, barely touched her lips to the drink offered her every morning by Vice, and replaced it wearily on the table by her bedside. She experienced no actual pain, but felt a strange weariness; it was rather a difficulty to live than a malady, and she could scarcely have described its symptoms to a physician. She called for a mirror, for a young girl is more troubled by the alteration suffering may produce on her beauty than by the suffering itself. She was extremely pale; only two red spots, like the petals of Bengal roses fallen in a cup of milk, swam on her white cheeks. Her eyes shone with unusual brightness, lighted up by the last flames of fever; but the cherry lips were pale, and she bit them with her pearly teeth to bring back the color.

She arose, enveloped herself in a white cashmere morning gown, wrapped a gauzy scarf around her head—for, notwithstanding the ardent heat, she still felt chilled—and went

down to the terrace at the usual hour that she might not awaken the ever watchful solicitude of the Commodore. Although she was not at all hungry, she forced some food down her throat, for she knew that the least indication of illness would be attributed by Sir Joshua Ward to Paul's influence, and this was what Alicia was anxious to avoid above all things.

Then, under pretext that the dazzling light of the day fatigued her, she retired to her room, not without, however, having reiterated many times to the Commodore, who was suspicious in such matters, the assurances that she was delightfully well.

"Delightfully well—I doubt it," muttered the Commodore to himself when his niece had disappeared. "She has dark circles around her eyes and a feverish color in her cheeks just like her poor mother, who also insisted that she was delightfully well. What can I do? Take Paul away from her? That would be killing her in another way. I must wait and see what time will do, Alicia is so young! Ah! yes, but old Mob always robs us of the youngest and most fair; she is as jealous as a woman. Why

not send for a physician? But alas! what can medicine do for an angel? Yet all the alarming symptoms have disappeared. Ah! accursed Paul, if it were you whose breath bowed down this divine flower, I would strangle you with my own hands. But then, Nancy was not under the influence of the glance of a jettatore, and she died. If Alicia were to die! No, it is not possible. I have done no wrong that God should reserve for me such frightful sorrow. When that sad event happens I shall be sleeping in the shadow of my native village steeple beneath a tomb stone inscribed: '*Sacred to the memory of Sir Joshua Ward.*' It is she who will weep and pray on the gray stone for the old Commodore—Bah! I know not why; but I am devilish gloomy and melancholy this morning!"

To dispel these gloomy ideas, the Commodore added a little Jamaica rum to his now almost cold tea, and called for his hookah, an innocent distraction he allowed himself only in Alicia's absence, as she might have been annoyed even by this light smoke mingled with perfume.

The aromatized water was already boiling in its receptacle and he had already puffed a few bluish clouds, when Vice announced Count d'Altavilla. "Sir Joshua," said the Count, after the first greeting, "have you reflected on the proposal I made the other day?"

"I have reflected," replied the Commodore, "but as you are aware M. Paul d'Aspremont has my word."

"It is true, but there are circumstances when a gentleman may withdraw his word; for instance, when the man to whom it was given, for some reason or other, is not what he was at first believed to be."

"Count, I beseech you, speak more clearly."

"It is repugnant to me to accuse a rival. But after the conversation we have already had you must understand me. If you rejected M. Paul d'Aspremont, would you accept me as your niece's husband?"

"I certainly would, but I am not so sure that Miss Ward would be pleased by the substitution. She is in love with this Paul, and I must admit that it is my own fault to some extent, for I favored the young man myself before hearing all

these foolish stories—pardon the epithet Count, but my brain is really topsy-turvy."

"Do you wish your niece to die?" asked Altavilla in a grave and tender tone.

"Blood and thunder! My niece die!" cried the Commodore starting from his chair and dashing his hookah to the ground.

This sensitive chord in Sir Joshua Ward always vibrated to the touch.

"Is my niece then dangerously ill?" he added agitatedly.

"Do not be alarmed, Sir Joshua; Miss Alicia may live many years yet."

"So much the better! you gave me quite a start."

"But on one condition," continued Altavilla, not heeding the interruption, "she must not again see M. Pauld'Aspremont."

"Ah! the jettatura once more! Unfortunately, Miss Ward does not believe in it."

"Listen," said the Count gravely. "When I met Miss Alicia for the first time at the Prince of Syracuse's ball and conceived a passion for her, as ardent as it was respectful, it was glowing health, the joy of existence, the flower of

life, that bloomed in her whole person and which struck me at first. Her beauty was dazzling and floated, as it were, in an atmosphere of health. This phosphorescence made her shine like a star. She threw in the shade English, Russians and Italians, and I saw but her. To distinction was added the pure and strong grace of a goddess; excuse this mythology in a descendant of Greeks."

"It is true, she was beautiful! Miss Edwina O'Herty, Lady Eleonor Lilly, Miss Jane Strangford and Princess Vera Fedorowna Bariatineki turned yellow with envy," said the enchanted Commodore.

"And now do you not notice that her beauty has assumed something of languor, that her features have become more delicate, her hands more transparent than they should be, that her voice has a painful charm, an alarming vibration? The terrestrial element is vanishing, leaving the angelic element to dominate. Miss Alicia has become of ethereal perfection and though you may find me material, I must admit that I do not like to see this in young girls of this globe."

The Count's words agreed so well with his secret apprehensions, that Sir Joshua Ward remained silent for a few moments, lost in a deep reverie.

"It is all true," he said at last; "although I sometimes try to deceive myself, I cannot be blind to it."

"This is not all," resumed the Count. "had Miss Alicia's health caused you any anxiety previous to M. Paul d'Aspremont's arrival in England?"

"Never; she was the most blooming and gayest child in the three kingdoms."

"As you see, M. d'Aspremont's presence coincides with the periods of illness that undermine Miss Alicia's precious health. I do not ask you, a northern man, to believe implicitly in a prejudice, a superstition,—if you wish to call it so—of our Southern country, but you must admit that these facts are strange and deserve your attention."

"Might not Alicia be ill—naturally?" stammered the Commodore, shaken by the captious reasonings of Altavilla, but retaining a sort of

English shame at adopting a popular Neapolitan belief.

"Miss Alicia is not ill; she is the victim of a sort of poisoning by the glance, and if M. d'Aspremont is not a jettatore, he is at least calamitous.

"What can I do?" asked the Commodore in despair, "she loves Paul, laughs at the jettatura and insists that we cannot refuse an honorable man by giving such reasons."

"I have no right to interfere with your niece, I am neither her brother, her relative, nor her fiancee; but if I obtained your consent, I would certainly make an effort to tear her from this fatal influence. Oh! fear not; I will do nothing rash—although young, I know that a young girl's name must be preciously guarded. Only permit me to keep my plan a secret. Have enough confidence in me to believe that I would do nothing that the most delicate honor could object to.

"Your love for my niece must be deep?" said the Commodore.

"Yes, since I love her without hope. But do you grant me the license to act?"

"You are a terrible man, Count Altavilla. Ah well! try to save Alicia your own way, I will not find it bad, and will not even find it very good."

The Count arose, bowed, returned to his carriage and ordered the coachman to drive to the Hotel de Rome.

Paul, his elbows on the table, his face buried in his hand, was plunged in the most painful reflections. He had seen the blood stains on Alicia's handkerchief, and, still infatuated by his fixed idea, he reproached himself for his murderous love. He felt himself guilty in accepting the devotion of this beautiful young girl resolved to die for him, and asked himself by what superhuman sacrifice he could repay this sublime abnegation.

Paddy, the dwarf jockey, interrupted this meditation by presenting the Count's card.

"Count Altavilla!" exclaimed Paul in surprise. "What can he want of me? Show him in."

When the Neapolitan Count appeared in the door, M. d'Aspremont had already disguised his astonishment under that mask of glacial in-

difference which assists people of the world in concealing their impressions.

He pointed to a chair with cold politeness, resumed his own seat, and awaited in silence, his eyes fixed on the visitor.

"Monsieur," began the Count, toying with the trinkets on his watch-chain, "what I have to say is so strange, so out of place, so improper that you would have the right to pitch me out of the window.—Spare me that brutality, I beg you, for I am ready to give you satisfaction as a gentlenam."

"I am listening, Monsieur, but I reserve the right to take advantage of your offer, if your conversation does not suit me," replied Paul, without moving one muscle of his face.

"You are a jettatore!"

At these words a greenish pallor suddenly overspread M. d'Aspremont's features, a reddish aureole encircled his eyes, his eyebrows contracted, the wrinkle deepened in his forehead, and his pupils flashed like sulphurous lights. He half raised himself, tearing with his clenched hands the arms of his bamboo chair. It was so terrible that Altavilla, though a

brave man, instinctively seized one of the double branches of coral attached to his chain and directed its points toward his interlocutor,

By a supreme effort of will, Paul controlled himself and fell back into his chair.

"You were right, Monsieur," he said coldly, "such indeed was the recompense merited by insult, but I will have the patience to await another reparation."

"Believe me," continued the Count, "I would not offer a gentleman this insult, which can be washed out only in blood, without the gravest motives. I love Miss Alicia Ward!"

"What matters it to me?"

"It matters little in fact, for you are loved. But I, Don Felipe Altavilla, I forbid you to see Miss Alicia Ward."

"I take no orders from you."

"I know it," replied the Neapolitan Count, "and I have no hope that you will obey me."

"Then what is your motive?" asked Paul.

"I have the conviction that the fascino with which you are gifted, unfortunately, influences Miss Alicia Ward in a fatal manner. It is an absurd idea, a prejudice worthy of the Middle

Ages, and must appear very ridiculous to you; but we will not discuss that question. Whenever your eyes rest on Miss Ward you influence her with that evil glance which will kill her. I have no means to prevent this sad result, but to quarrel with you, German fashion. In the sixteenth century, I would have had you killed by one of my mountain peasants; but in our days those methods are not in vogue. I thought of begging you to return to France; it was too naive: you would have laughed at the rival who told you to go and leave him alone near your fiancee, under pretext of jettatura."

While the Count talked on, Paul d'Aspremont felt himself invaded by a secret horror. He, a Christian, was then a victim of the powers of hell, and the fallen angel looked out through his pupils! He sowed catastrophies in his path, his love gave death! For an instant his reason tottered, and madness beat its wings within the walls of his brain.

"Count, on your honor, do you believe what you say?" cried Paul, after a short silence which Altavilla respected.

"On my honor, I believe it," he replied.

"Oh! then, it must be true!" said Paul in a strange voice. "I am a assassin, a demon, a vampire! I am killing that celestial being, and reducing her poor uncle to despair!"

He was on the point of promising the count not to see Alicia again, but self-respect and the jealousy that was awakening in his heart, choked back the words from his lips.

"Count," he said gravely," I will not conceal the fact, that I am going to see Miss Ward at once."

"I will not take you by the collar to prevent you," replied the count, "you spared me the humilation a few moments ago, and I am grateful. But I shall be delighted to see you tomorrow at six o'clock in the ruins of Pompeii, in the thermal hall, let us say, it is a very good place. What arms do you prefer? You are the offended party: sword or pistol?"

"We shall fight with daggers and with eyes bandaged, separated by a handkerchief of which we shall each hold one end. We must equalize the chances: I am a jettatore; I might kill you with one glance, Monsieur le Comte!"

As he said these words, Paul d'Aspremont

burst into a bitter laugh, pushed open a door, and disappeared.

CHAPTER XII.

Alicia had taken possession of a low room, with walls adorned with landscapes in fresco, which in Italy, replaces wall paper. Mats of Manilla straw covered the floor; a table with a Turkish cover on which were scattered the poems of Coleridge, Shelley, Tennyson and Longfellow; a mirror with antique frame, and a few cane chairs composed the furnishings of this simple room. Blinds of China bamboo, embellished with pagodas, rocks, willows, cranes, and dragons, were adjusted to the door and windows, allowing only a soft subdued light to filter into the room; an orange branch, loaded with flowers, penetrated familiarly into the room and stretched like a wreath above Alicia's head, showering a perfumed snow over her.

The young girl was still suffering and reclined on a narrow sofa near the window. She was half raised by two or three cushions and a Venetian rug was carelessly thrown over her feet. Thus she could receive Paul without offending the laws of English propriety.

The book she had been reading had slipped unheeded to the floor, and her eyes wandered vaguely, seeming to look beyond this world from under the long eye-lashes. She experienced that almost voluptuous languor that follows a fever, and she listlessly ate the orange flowers that showered around her, enjoying the bitter perfume. Is there not a Venus eating roses of Schiavone? What a graceful counterpart a modern artist could have made to the painting of the old Venetian by representing Alicia nibbling orange flowers!

She was thinking of Paul and asking herself if she would really live long enough to be his wife. Not that she believed in the jettatura, but she felt herself a prey, in spite of herself, to gloomy presentiments; the previous night she had a dream, the impression of which had been dispelled by her awakening.

In her dream, she was lying on her couch. though wide awake, with her eyes fixed on the door of her chamber, feeling a presentiment that someone would appear. After two or three minutes of anxious waiting she saw on the threshold a delicate female form, which, at first

seemed quite transparent, allowing objects to be seen through her as if through a light mist, but assuming more consistency as she approached the bed.

She wore a muslin dress, the folds trailing on the ground; spiral waves of long black hair framed the pale face, with small round spots on the cheek bones. The skin of the throat and breast was so white that it confounded itself with the dress, making it impossible to tell where the skin ended and the dress began. A delicate Venetian necklace encircled the slender throat with a narrow band of gold, and the white blue veined hands held a flower—a tea rose—the petals of which fell to the ground like tears.

Alicia had never known her mother, who had died a year after her birth, but she had often stood in contemplation before an almost faded miniature, showing the waxy color seen in the dying, and which seemed more like the portrait of a shadow than that of the living, and she realized that this woman entering the room was Nancy Ward—her mother. The white dress, the necklace, the black hair, the white

cheeks tinged with rose, nothing was wanting. It was indeed the miniature, enlarged, developed, imbued with all the reality of a dream.

A feeling of tenderness mingled with terror made Alicia's heart beat fast. She tried to extend her arms toward the shadow, but her arms seemed heavy as marble and she could not raise them from the couch on which they rested. She tried to speak, but her tongue only stammered confused syllables.

After placing the tea-rose on the table, Nancy knelt beside the bed and laid hand on Alicia's heart, listening to the breathing, counting the beatings of the heart; the cold cheek of the shadow caused the young girl, who was frightened by this silent auscultation, the sensation of a lump of ice.

The apparition then arose, cast a sorrowful glance on the young girl, and counting the leaves on the rose from which a few more petals had fallen, she said:

"There is but one left."

Then slumber had interposed its black veil between the shadow and the sleeper, and all had become confounded in the night.

Had the spirit of her mother come to warn her and take her away? What signified that mysterious phrase fallen from the lips of the shadow: "There is but one left?" Was this pale, leafless rose the symbol of her life? This strange dream, with its fascinating terrors and frightful charm, this graceful spectre draped in muslin and counting the flower petals, pre-occupied the young girl's imagination. A shadow of melancholy hovered over her beau tiful brow and an undefinable presentiment brushed its black wings against her.

Did not this orange branch showering its flowers on her have a funereal meaning? the small virginal stars would not then bloom under her bridal veil? Saddened and pensive, Alicia withdrew the flowers she was biting from her lips; they were already withered and yellow.

The hour of Paul's visit was approaching; Alicia made an effort to appear well. She twisted her curls about her fingers, readjusted the folds of her gauze scarf, and picked up a book to appear occupied.

Paul entered, and Alicia welcomed him with

a gay laugh, that he might not be alarmed at finding her lying down, for he would not have failed to believe himself the cause of her illness. The scene that had just taken place between himself and the Count gave Paul a wild and irritated expression that caused Vice to make the exorcising sign, but the affectionate smile of Alicia soon dispelled the cloud.

"I hope you are not seriously ill," he said, seating himself at her side.

"Oh! it is nothing, only a little fatigue. We had a southeast wind yesterday, and that African sirocco overcame me. But you shall see how well I will be in our Lincolnshire cottage! Now that I am strong we will go boating every day on the pond."

As she spoke, she made an effort to repress a little convulsive cough.

Paul d'Aspremont turned pale and looked away.

Silence then reigned for a few moments.

"Paul, I have never given you anything," said Alicia, taking from her already emaciated finger a plain gold ring; "take this ring and keep it in remembrance of me. You can, per-

haps wear it, for you have the hand of a woman — Adieu! I feel weary and will try to sleep. Come to me to-morrow."

Paul withdrew heart-broken. Alicia's efforts to conceal her sufferings had been in vain. He loved her wildy, passionately, and he was killing her. Was not this ring she had just given him a ring of betrothal for the next world?

He wandered aimlessly on the beach, half crazed, dreaming of flight, of burying himself in a monastery, with the Trappists, and there awaiting death, seated on his coffin, without ever raising the hood of his frock. He reproached himself with ingratitude and cowardice for not sacrificing his love, and for abusing the heroism of Alicia.

"Yes," he murmured half aloud, "this handsome Neapolitan Count whom she scorns loves her truly. His unselfish love shames mine. To save Alicia, he did not fear to attack me, to challenge me, a jettatore, that is, in his opinion, a being as redoubtable as a demon. Whilst he spoke, he toyed with his charms against the fascino, and the eyes of this celebrated duelist, who has killed three men, shrunk before mine."

He returned to the hotel, wrote a few letters, made his will, leaving all he possessed to Miss Alicia Ward, save a bequest to Paddy, and made all the indispensable dispositions a gentleman should take on the eve of a duel to the death.

He then opened a box lined with green serge, in which he kept his arms. He took out alternately swords, pistols, hunting knives, and finally came to two Corsican stilettos, perfectly alike, which he had bought as a gift to a friend.

They were two blades of pure steel, thick near the handle, sharp on both sides toward the point, embossed curiously, and mounted with care. He next chose three silk handkerchiefs and made one bundle of the whole.

He then ordered Scazzigo to be ready very early the next morning for an excursion in the country.

"Oh!" he cried as he threw himself on the bed without removing his clothes, "may heaven grant that this combat be fatal to me! If I had the happiness of being killed—Alicia would live!"

CHAPTER XIII.

POMPEII, the dead city, does not awaken in the morning like her living sisters, and although she has half thrown off the pall of ashes that covered her for so many centuries, even when night fades away she remains asleep still on her funeral couch.

The tourists of all nations who visit her during the day are at that early hour still stretched on their beds, worn out by the fatigues of their excursions, and as dawn breaks over the ruins of the ancient city it lights up no human face. The lizards alone crawl along the walls and over the disjointed mosaics, unmindful of the "Cave canem" inscribed on the door sills of the deserted houses, and welcome joyously the first rays of sunlight. They are the inhabitants who have succeeded the former citizens, and one might think Pompeii had been exhumed for them alone.

It is a strange spectacle in the azure and rosy light of the morning, this corpse of a city surprised in the midst of its pleasures, its works,

and civilization, and which has not undergone the slow dissolution of ordinary ruins. We involuntarily expect to see the inhabitants of these houses preserved in their least details, come out of their dwellings in their Greek or Roman dress; the chariots, whose tracks we see on the pavement, resume their rolling; the wine-drinkers enter the wine-houses, where the marks of the cups are still visible on the marble of the counters. We walk as if in a dream in the midst of the past; we read in red letters at street corners the announcement of the attraction of the day!—only the day is passed, more than eighteen centuries ago.

In the dawning light of the day the *danseuses* painted on the walls seem to wave their arms, and with the tips of their white feet raise, like a rosy foam, the edge of their draperies, believing no doubt that the lamps are being lighted for the orgies of the trictinium. The Venuses, the satyrs, the heroic or the grotesque figures, animated by the rising sun, try to replace the vanished inhabitants and give to the dead city a painted population. The colored shadows tremble on the walls, and the mind

can for a few moments lend itself to the illusion of an ancient phantasmagoria. But on this day, to the great alarm of the lizards, the matutinal serenity of Pompeii was disturbed by a strange visitor, a carriage stopped, Paul alighted and directed his steps toward the place of rendezvous.

He was first, and although his mind was preoccupied by many things beside archeology, he could not help remarking as he walked on a thousand little details which he would not perhaps have noticed under ordinary circumstances. The senses, when not under the control of the soul, and free to exercise themselves independently, have sometimes a singular lucidity. Condemned persons, on their way to execution, distinguish a small flower between the chinks of the pavement, a number on the button of a uniform, a fault of orthography on a signboard, or many other trivial cicumstances, which in their eyes possesses enormous importance.

M. d'Aspremont passed before the villa of Diomedes, the sepulchre of Mammia, the funereal hemicycles, the ancient gate of the city,

the dwellings and shops that line the Consular road, almost without glancing at them, and yet the colored and striking images were imprinted on his mind with perfect clearness. He saw everything; the fluted columns covered to half their height with red or yellow stucco, the frescoed paintings, and the inscriptions traced on the walls; an announcement in red letters was so deeply engraved on his memory that his lips mechanically repeated the Latin words without attaching any sense to them.

Was it the thought of the coming combat that absorbed Paul to this point? Not at all. His thoughts were far away from those surroundings. He was again in the drawing room at Richmond, presenting his letter of introduction to the Commodore, and Alicia was looking at him while pretending not to do so. She wore a white dress, and jasmine flowers in her hair. How young, beautiful, and full of life she was—then!

The ancient baths are at the end of the Consular Avenue, and Paul d'Aspremont found them without trouble. He entered the vaulted

room encircled by a row of terra-cotta niches, supporting an architrave adorned with figures and foliage. The facings of marble, the mosaics, the bronze tripods, have disappeared. Nothing is left of the ancient splendor but the argil frames and the walls which are as bare as those of a tomb. A faint ray of light filtering through a small, round window, through which was revealed a patch of blue sky, trembled on the broken flags of the pavement.

This is where the women of Pompeii came after their baths to dry their beautiful bodies, brush their luxuriant hair, resume their draperies, and smile at themselves in the burnished brass of the mirrors. A far different scene was about to take place there, and blood would flow on the pavement where perfumes had streamed in days of yore.

A few moments later Count Altavilla appeared; he held a box of pistols in his hand, and carried two swords under his arm, for he could not believe that the conditions proposed by Paul d'Aspremont were serious. He thought it but a Mephistophelic raillery, a diabolical sarcasm.

"Why have you brought those swords and pistols, Count?" said Paul as he saw this panoply. "Did we not agree on another mode of combat?"

"Yes, it is true; but I thought you might change your mind. I have never heard of such a mode of combat," replied Altavilla.

"Were our skill equal, my position would give me too much advantage over you," said Paul with a bitter smile, "and I will not abuse it. Here are the stiletos I have brought, examine them, they are perfectly alike. And here are the handkerchiefs to bandage our eyes. See, they are thick, and my glance cannot pierce the tissues."

Count Altavilla made a sign of acquiescence.

"We have no witnesses" resumed Paul, "and one of us will not go out of this cave alive. Let us each write a note testifying to the fairness of the combat; the conqueror will place it on the breast of the dead."

"An excellent precaution!" replied the Neapoltan, as he traced a few lines on a leaf of Paul's note-book. Then presenting it to his adversary the latter went through the same formality.

They then divested themselves of their coats, bandaged their eyes, armed themselves with their stilettos and took each one extremity of the handkerchief—a terrible link between their hatred.

"Are you ready?" asked Paul d'Aspremont of Count Altavilla.

"Yes," replied the Neapolitan in a perfectly calm tone.

Don Felipe Altavilla was of tried bravery; he feared nothing in this world but the jettatura, and this blind-folded combat, which would have made anyone else tremble with terror, did not trouble him in the least. He was merely playing his life on even terms and would not be inconvenienced by seeing the evil eye of his adversary casting its yellow rays on him.

The duelists brandished their knives, and the handkerchief that united them in this thick darkness was strained to its utmost. By an instinctive movement Paul and the Count had thrown themselves back—the only parade possible in this strange duel—and their arms fell without touching anything but vacancy.

This obscure struggle, in which each felt

death near without seeing it come, possessed something horrible. Cautious and silent, the two adversaries recoiled, turned, jumped, stumbled, missed or went beyond their aim; nothing was heard but the shuffling of their feet and their panting breath.

Once Altavilla felt the point of his stiletto come in contact with something. He stopped, thinking he had killed his rival, and awaited the fall of the body — but he had only struck the wall!

"By the gods! I thought I had pierced you through and through," he said, putting himself on guard once more.

"Do not speak," said Paul, "your voice guides me."

And they resumed their combat.

Suddenly the two adversaries fell themselves separated. A stroke of Paul's stiletto had cut the handkerchief in two.

"A truce!" cried the Neapolitan, "we are separated, the handkerchief is cut."

"Never mind! let us keep on," replied Paul.

A mournful silence followed. As loyal enemies, neither Paul d'Aspremont nor the Count

would take advantage of the indications given by their exchange of words. They took a few steps back and again sought each other in the darkness.

Paul dislodged a pebble with his foot; this slight noise revealed to the Neapolitan the direction he should go. With the bound of a tiger he dashed toward his adversary and met Paul's stiletto.

Paul d'Aspremont felt the point of his weapon and found that it was wet — uncertain, faltering steps resounded on the stones, an oppressed sigh was heard, and a body rolled heavily to the ground.

Filled with horror, Paul tore the bandage from his eyes and saw Count Altavilla, pale, motionless, stretched on his back, and a deep red stain on his shirt in the region of the heart.

The handsome Neapolitan was dead!

Paul d'Aspremont placed the note testifying to the fairness of the duel on Altavilla's breast, and emerged from this bath of antiquity paler in the daylight than the criminal Prud'hon caused to be pursued by the avenging Erinnys in the moonlight.

CHAPTFR XIV.

ABOUT two clock in the afternoon of the same day, a party of English tourists, under the guidance of a cicerone, were visiting the ruins of Pompeii; the insular tribe, composed of the father, mother, three grown daughters, two small boys and a cousin, had already wandered through the amphitheatre, the theater of song and tragedy, in such curious juxtapositions; the military quarter, placarded with caricatures by the idle guards; the Forum, surprised in the midst of repairs; the Basilique, the temples of Venus and Jupiter, the Pantheon, and the shops that surround them, glancing at everything with that cold and stolid eye in which could be read that profound ennui which characterizes the British race They walked on in silence, following the explanations of their loquacious guide, and scarcely casting a glance on the columns, fragments of statues, mosaics, frescoes and inscriptions.

They finally reached the ancient baths, discovered in 1824, as their guide remarked:

"Here were the tubs, there the water heater, further on the hall with a moderate temperature," explained he, in the Neapolitan *patois*, intermixed with a few English terminations. But all these details seemed to interest the visitors but little, and they were already turning face-about to withdraw when Miss Ethelwina, the eldest of the young ladies, a young person with flaxen hair and freckled cheeks, started back, half shocked, half frightened, and cried: "A Man!"

"It is no doubt some workman who found this to be a good spot for a nap; it is always cool and shady under this vault. Don't be frightened Miss," said the guide, pushing the body stretched on the ground with his foot. "Here! wake up, you good-for-nothing, and let their ladyships go by."

The supposed sleeper did not stir.

"It is not a sleeping man, but a corpse," cried one of the small boys, who, owing to his stature, could better distinguish the appearance of the figure in the semi-obscurity.

The cicerone bent over the body, and started back in alarm.

"A murdered man!" he cried.

"Oh! how dreadful to find one's self in the presence of such objects," exclaimed Mrs. Bracebridge; "Ethelwina, Kittie, Bess, leave this place at once! It is highly improper for well-bred young persons to look at such a shocking sight. Are there no police in this country? The coroner should have had the body removed." "A paper!" exclaimed the cousin laconically. He was a tall, stiff and awkward young man, who reminded one of the Laird of Dumbidikes in the "Heart of Mid-lothian."

"True enough," said the guide, as he picked up the note on Altavilla's breast, "a paper with a few lines of writing on it."

"Read it!" they all cried in chorus, their curiosity having reached the highest pitch.

And the guide obediently read the following:

"Let no search be made, nor any one be troubled on account of my death. If this note is found on my wound, I will have succumbed in a fair duel."

"Signed Felipe, Count d'Altavilla."

"He was a gentleman; what a pity," sighed

Mrs. Bracebridge, impressed by the rank of the dead count.

"And what a handsome young man," murmured the freckled Ethelwina.

"You can no longer complain of the want of incidents in our travels," said Bess to Kitty. "We were not stopped by brigands on the road from Terracine to Fondi, it is true; but to find a young lord, killed by a dagger in the ruins of Pompeii, is indeed an adventure. There must have been a love affair at the bottom of it. We shall now, at least, have something Italian, something picturesque and romantic to relate to our friends on our return. I shall make a sketch of the scene in my album, and you will write a few mysterious stanzas beneath it, in the style of Byron."

"It was a well-directed thrust," said the guide; "it was given upward, according to the rules, so there is nothing to say."

Such was the funeral orison over Count Altavilla.

A workman, informed by the guide, went in search of the proper authorities, and the body

of the unfortunate Count was carried to his castle near Salerno.

As to Paul d'Aspremónt, he had regained his carriage, walking like a somnambulist, with his eyes wide open, but seeing nothing. He seemed like a statue, although at sight of the corpse he had felt that religious horror inspired by death, he did not feel guilty, and remorse did not make part of his despair. Challenged in a way he could not refuse, he had accepted with the hope of losing a life which had become odious to him. Endowed with a calamitous glance, he had insisted on fighting this duel blind-folded, that fatality alone might be responsible for the result. His hand had not even struck the fatal blow; his enemy had dashed on his stiletto and impaled himself! He pitied Count Altavilla as if he had been a stranger to his death.

"My stiletto killed him," he said to himself, but if I had glanced at him in a ball-room, a chandelier would have fallen from the ceiling and crushed his head. I am as innocent as the thunderbolt, the avalanche, the billows, and all those unconscious and des-

tructive forces. I have never injured anyone willingly; my heart is full of love and benevolence. The thunderbolt knows not that it kills; but I, a man, an intelligent creature, have I not a severe duty to fulfill toward myself? I should arraign and interrogate myself before my own tribunal. Can I remain in this world where I cause nothing but calamaties? Would heaven curse me if I killed myself through love for my neighbors? It is a deep and terrible question which I dare not answer. Yet it seems to me that in my position voluntary death is excusable. But if I were mistaken? I should be deprived of the sight of Alicia during eternity, when I could look at her without harming her, for the eyes of the soul have no fascino. It is a risk I will not run."

A sudden thought flashed through the brain of the unfortunate jettatore and interrupted his interior monologue. His features relaxed; the immutable serenity which always follows great resolutions smoothed his pale brow: he had taken a supreme determination.

"Ah, unfortunate eyes, you are condemned

since you are murderers," he said half aloud; "but, before closing forever, saturate yourself with light, contemplate the sun, the blue sky, the immense sea, the azure chains of mountains, the green trees, the infinite horizon, the colonnades of palaces, the fisherman's hut, the distant islands of the gulf, the white sails skimming the waters, Vesuvius with its crest of smoke: look well, that you may remember all the charming spectacles you shall never again see, study each form and each color, give yourself a last feast. For to-day, woeful or not, you may rest on everything; intoxicate yourself with the magnificent spectacle of nature! Go, see, wander over all things. The curtain will fall between you and the scenes of the universe!"

The carriage at this moment was rolling along the shore. The bay sparkled in the sun, the sky seemed cut from one sapphire, and a splendor of beauty enshrouded everything.

Paul ordered Scazziga to stop the carriage. He alighted, seated himself on a stone, and took a long, long glance before him, as if he would possess himself of the infinite. His eyes

swam into space and light, rolling as if in ecstacy, impregnating light and imbibing sun! The night that was to follow would have no dawn for him.

Tearing himself from this silent contemplation, Paul d' Aspremont returned to the carriage and ordered Scazziga to drive to Miss Ward's villa.

Alicia was reclining, as on the former day, on the narrow sofa in the low room already described. Paul took a seat opposite her, but did not keep his eyes to the ground as he had always done since he had become conscious of his evil power.

Alicia's perfect beauty was spiritualized by her sufferings; the woman had almost disappeared to make place to the angel. Her skin seemed transparent, etherialized, luminous; her soul could be seen through it as a light in an alabaster lamp. Her eyes had the infinite of heaven and the scintillation of the star; life scarcely imprinted its red signature on the ruby lips.

A divine smile illuminated them, as a sunbeam brightens a rose, when she saw her fiancee

enveloping her in a long caressing gaze. She believed that Paul had at last driven away his gloomy thoughts of jettatura and was returning to her happy and confident as in the first days of their love, and she extended her small delicate hand, which he grasped and retained in his own.

"Don't I frighten you any longer?" she said banteringly to Paul, whose eyes were still fixed on her.

"Oh! let me look at you," he replied in a strange voice, as he knelt beside her; "let me intoxicate myself with your ineffable beauty!"

And he contemplated with avidity Alicia's lustrous black hair; the beautiful brow, pure as a Greek marble; the eyes of blue black, like the azure of a beautiful night; the delicately chiseled nose; the mouth on which hovered a languid smile, half displaying the pearly teeth; the flexible and undulating swan-like throat, and seemed to note and impress on his mind each feature, each detail, each perfection, like an artist who wishes to make a portrait from memory. He was satiating himself with the

adored features; he was storing away a provision of souvenirs, seizing every line and curve.

Under this ardent gaze, Alicia, fascinated and, charmed, experienced a sensation that was at once voluptuously painful and agreeably mortal. Her life ebbed and flowed, she flushed and paled, became cold, then burning. A moment more, and her soul would have taken flight.

She placed her hand over his eyes, but the young man's gaze penetrated her frail transparent finger like a flame.

"My sight may now be extinguished, I shall always see her in my heart," Paul said as he arose.

That night, after he had watched the sunset — the last he should ever see — Paul returned to the Hotel de Rome and called for a chafing-dish and some coal.

"Is he going to asphyxiate himself?" thought Virgilio Falsacappa when Paddy transmitted his master's order; "it is the best thing he can do, the accursed jettatore!"

Alicia's fiancee opened the window, contrary to Falsacappa's conjectures, lighted the coal,

plunged the blade of a dagger into the flames and waited until the steel became red hot.

The thin blade was soon at a white heat in the midst of the incandescent coals. Paul, as if to take leave of himself, leaned his elbows on the chimney-piece opposite a large mirror in which was reflected the light from a many branched candlestick, and he looked at this sort of spectre which was himself, the envelop of his thought which he would never again see, with melancholy curiosity.

"Farewell, pale phantom that I have dragged through life for so many years, sinister and misshapen form in which beauty is mingled with the horrible, argil marked on the brow with a fatal seal, convulsed mask of a good and tender soul! you shall disappear forever to me! Living, I plung you in eternal darkness and soon I shall have forgotten you like the dream of a tempestuous night. Miserable body! you will cry out in vain to my inflexible will: 'Hubert! Hubert my poor eyes!' you will not soften it. Come, proceed, victim and executioner!" And he walked away from the chimney and sat on the edge of his bed.

He enlivened the coals by blowing on them, and grasped the handle of the dagger from which flew white sparks.

At this supreme moment, notwithstanding his firm resolution, Paul almost faltered; a cold sweat bathed his temples, but he soon conquered this purely physical hesitation and approached the burning steel to his eyes.

A sharp, shooting, intolerable pain almost brought a cry to his lips. It seemed as if two jets of molten lead were penetrating through the pupils to the back of his skull; he dropped the dagger and it rolled to the floor where it burnt out a brown mark.

A thick opaque darkness, in comparison of which the darkest night would be a magnificent day, enveloped him in its black veil. He turned his head toward the chimney on which, he knew, the candles must be burning, but he saw only dense impenetrable shadows in which did not even tremble the vague lights that a person sees through his closed eyelids when facing a light.

The sacrifice was consummated.

"Now, noble and charming creature, I may

become your husband whithout being an assassin," he murmured. "You will no longer perish heroically under my fatal gaze; you will regain your precious health. Alas! I shall never again see you, but your celestial image will burn with immortal brightness in my memory. I shall see you with the eyes of my soul; I shall hear your voice, more harmonious than the sweetest music; I shall feel the air displaced by your movements; I shall hear the soft rustling of your dress, the imperceptible creaking of your slippers; I shall breathe the delicate perfume that emanates from you and creates an atmosphere around you. Sometimes, you will place your hand within my own to convince me of your presence, you will guide my hesitating footsteps on their obscure path, you will read me the poets, and describe the paintings and statues. By your words, you will bring back the vanished universe; you shall be my only thought, my only dream; deprived of the sights of nature and the splendors of light, my soul will fly to you with an indefatigable wing!"

"I regret nothing since you are saved; what

have I lost, after all? The monotonous spectacle of seasons, of days, the sight of more or less picturesque scenery on which is unfolded the hundred divers act of the sad human comedy. The earth, the sky, the waters, the mountains, the trees, the flowers, vain appearance, fastidious repetitions, unchangeable forms! When we have love, we possess the true sun, the light that never goes out!"

The unhappy young man went on in this strain talking to himself, enfevered by a lyric exaltation in which sometimes mingled the delirium of suffering.

Little by little the pain lessened, and he fell into that black sleep, brother of death and consoler like her.

Daylight, in penetrating into his chamber, did not awaken him. Noon and midnight would henceforth be the same to him; but the bells joyously ringing the *Angelus* tinkled vaguely through his slumber, and, little by little becoming more distinct, drew him from his oblivion.

He raised his eyelids, and, even before his still numbed soul recalled anything, he ex-

perienced a horrible sensation. His eyes were opening on vacancy, on obscurity, on nothing, as if, buried alive, he were awakening from a trance in a coffin. But he soon realized his position. Would it not be always thus? Would he not pass, each morning, from the obscurity of sleep to the obscurity of day?

He groped around for the bell-rope, and Paddy answered the summons at once.

"I was imprudent enough to sleep with my window open," Paul hastened to say, to cut short Paddy's exclamations of surprise at his uncertain steps, "and I believe I have caught rheumatism, but it is nothing serious. Guide me to my easy chair and give me a glass of fresh water."

Paddy, who had the discretion of an Englishman, made no remark, but executed his master's orders and withdrew.

Once alone, Paul dipped his handkerchief in the cool water and placed it over his eyes to soothe the burning pain.

But let us leave M. d'Aspremont in his painful immobility and return to the other personages of the story.

The news of Count Altavilla's strange death had spread rapidly through Naples and served as a theme for a thousand conjectures, each more extraordinary than the other. His ability in fencing was well known, and he had acquired a celebrity as one of the best shots of that Neapolitan school so dreaded on the field. He had killed three men and seriously wounded five or six. His renown in affairs of this kind was so well established that he was never called upon to fight. The greatest duelists of the day bowed politely before him, and avoided treading on his feet. Had one of those killed Altavilla, he would not have failed to claim the honor of his victory.

There remained the supposition of an assassination, but the note found on the dead man's breast proved this conjecture wrong also. At first a few were disposed to contest the authenticity of the writing, but the Count's handwriting was identified by persons who had received hundreds of letters from him. Then the bandage over his eyes, for the corpse had been found with the handkerchief still knotted about his head, seemed also inexplicable.

Besides the stiletto in the count's breast, a second one was found which had no doubt fallen from his dying hand. If the duel had been fought with daggers, why those swords and pistols which were identified as belonging to Altavilla? For the coachman affirmed he had brought them to Pompeii together with his master, who had ordered him to return home if he did not reappear within an hour.

Indeed no one could understand it.

The noise of this death soon reached Vice, who lost no time in informing Sir Joshua Ward. The Commodore, who at once recalled the mysterious conversation he had held with Altavilla concerning Alicia, understood confusedly that some secret attack, some desperate and horrible struggle had taken place, in which Paul d'Aspremont was voluntarily or involuntarily mixed. Vice, however, did not hesitate in attributing the handsome Count's death to that horrible jettatore, and in this instance her hatred served her in lieu of second sight.

Paul d'Aspremont had nevertheless called on Miss Ward at the accustomed hour, and nothing in his countenance had betrayed the emo-

tion of a terrible drama. He had even appeared more calm than usual.

This death was concealed from Alicia, whose state of health was becoming alarming, although the English physician summoned by Sir Joshua could find no well defined symptoms of disease. It was like a fading away from life, a fluttering of the soul agitating its wings to take flight, the suffocation of a bird under the pneumatic machine, rather than a real illness, that might be treated by ordinary means. She seemed like an angel retained on earth, but longing for heaven.

Alicia's beauty was so sweet, so delicate, so diaphanous, so immaterial, that the gross human atmosphere seemed no longer fit for her to breathe. She seemed to hover in the golden light of Paradise, and the small lace pillow that supported her head sparkled like an aureole. She resembled that delicate virgin of Shoorel, the finest jewel in the crown of Gothic art.

Paul d'Aspremont did not come that day. Wishing to keep his sacrifice a secret, he would not appear with his inflamed and reddened eyelids; he was determined to attribute his

sudden blindness to an entirely different cause.

The next day, the pain having left him, he entered his carriage, guided by the faithful Paddy.

The carriage stopped as usual at the wicket gate. Paul pushed it open, and, sounding the ground with his foot, started in the well-known path. Vice had not hurried out as usual at the noise of the bell set in motion by the spring of the gate; none of those thousand joyous sounds that seem like the breathing of a living house reached Paul's listening ears; a frightful, mournful silence reigned in the habitation which might have been thought abandoned. This silence, which would have been sinister even to a man possessing his sight, became still more lugubrious in the obscurity that enveloped the sightless man.

The invisible branches seemed to make an effort to retain him like beseeching arms, and prevent him from going further. The laurels barred his passage; the rose bushes clung to his clothes; the ivy twisted around his feet; the whole garden, in its dumb language, cried out: "Unfortunate young man! why are you

here? Do not force the obstacles I oppose to you. Go!"

But Paul heeded not, and tormented by terrible presentiments pushed through the thick foliage and masses of verdure, breaking the branches and advancing always toward the house.

Bruised and torn by the irritated branches, he at last reached the end of the path. A blast of fresh air struck his face, and he continued on, his hand extended before him.

He soon reached the wall of the house and groped his way to the door.

He entered. No friendly voice welcomed him. Hearing no sound to guide him, he stood hesitating a few minutes on the threshold. A smell of ether, an exhalation of perfume, an odor of burning wax, all the vague aromas of mortuary chambers arose to his nostrils. He trembled with terror. A frightful thought flashed through his mind, and he penetrated into the room.

After a few staggering steps, he came in contact with something that fell with a loud crash. He bent down and, picking it up, found that it was a brass chandelier such as is used in churches, and bearing a taper.

Wild with terror, he groped on in the obscurity. He thought he heard a low voice murmuring some prayers, and, taking another step in that direction, his hands met the edge of a bed. He bent down and his trembling fingers ran over first a stiff, motionless body, under a fine tunic, then a wreath of roses, and a face pure and cold as marble.

It was Alicia lying on her funeral couch.

"Dead!" cried Paul with a choked sob. "Dead! and it is I who have killed her!"

The Commodore, frozen with horror, had seen this specter with sightless eyes enter staggering, wander at hazard and grope his way to the dead body of his niece, and had understood all. The greatness of the useless sacrifice brought tears to the reddened eyes of the old man who believed he could weep no more.

Paul threw himself on his knees by the bedside and covered Alicia's hands with kisses; convulsive sobs shook his frame. His grief touched even the ferocious Vice, who stood silent and gloomy against the wall, watching the last sleep of her beloved mistress.

When this silent adieu was over, Paul arose

and walked mechanically toward the door, like an automaton moved by springs. His wide open eyes, with their sightless pupils, had a supernatural expression; although blind one would have believed he could see. He crossed the garden with a heavy step as if he were a marble apparition, and went out in the open country walking straight before him, stumbling over stones, straining his ears as if to catch a distant sound, but advancing always.

The grand voice of the sea resounded more and more distinct; the waves, raised by a stormy wind, broke against the shore with immense sobs, expression of unknown griefs, and their despairing breasts heaved beneath the crests of foam; millions of bitter tears inundated the rocks, and the alarmed sea gulls uttered plaintive cries.

Paul soon reached the edge of an overhanging rock. The noise of the billows, the salty spray that the wind tore from the waves and dashed in his face, should have warned him of his danger; but he took no heed. A strange smile contracted his pale lips, and he continued

his fatal walk, although he felt the void under his foot.

He fell; a monstrous wave seized him, whirled him for a few instants in its vortex and engulfed him.

Then the tempest burst in all its fury. The waves attacked the shore in close file, like warriors making an assault, and dashed the foam fifty feet in the air. The dark clouds opened like walls of hell, revealing, through the fissures, the fiery furnace of lightning. Blinding, sulphurous lights illuminated the vast expanse; the summit of Vesuvius reddened, and a tuft of dark vapors, beaten down by the wind, crowned the brow of the volcano. The ships moored to the quays dashed against each other with lugubrious sounds, and the overstrained riggings moaned painfully. Soon the rain fell, its drops hissing like arrows—it seemed as if chaos wished to retake nature and confound its elements once more.

Paul's body was never found, notwithstanding the researches made by the Commodore.

An ebony casket, with silver plate and handles, and lined in satin, such, in fact, as Miss

Clarissa Harlowe ordered ,with such touching grace, from the undertaker, was placed aboard a yacht, under the supervision of the Commodore, and conveyed to the family vault near the Lincolnshire cottage. It contained the body of Alicia Ward, beautiful even in death.

As to the Commodore, a remarkable change has taken place in his appearance. His glorious embonpoint has disappeared. He no longer takes rum in his tea, his appetite has deserted him, and he scarcely utters two words in the day. The contrast between his white whiskers and crimson face exists no longer—the Commodore has become pale.

[END.]

THE SCHWARENBACH INN.

BY GUY DE MAUPASSANT.

Far up on the Alps, at the foot of immense glaciers and in one of those rugged, barren defiles that cut through the white summits of the mountains, stands the Schwarenbach Inn, which serves as a refuge to travelers who follow the pass of the Gemmi.

During six months of the year it is inhabited by the family of Jean Hauser, and opened to wayfarers; but when the snows accumulate, filling the valley and rendering the descent to Loeche impracticable, the father and three sons, accompanied by the women of the household, abandon the inn, leaving it in charge of two trustworthy men and a faithful mountain dog.

The two men and the animal remain until spring in this snowy prison, having before

their eyes nothing but the immense white declivity of the Balmhorn; surrounded by pale glistening summits, imprisoned, enshrouded beneath the snow that ever ascends around them, hemming them in on all sides, crushing the low house, piling its flakes on the roof, shutting out the light from the windows and walling in the door.

The day of the return to Loeche had now come for the Hauser family. Winter was approaching and the descent becoming perilous.

Three mules, loaded with clothes and baggage and led by the three sons, went on ahead. Then the mother and her daughter, Louise, mounted a fourth mule and followed in their turn; while the father accompanied by the two guardians who were escorting the family to the summit of the descent, brought up the rear of the little cavalcade.

They slowly skirted the little lake that spread before the inn and which was already frozen to its greatest depth, then wended their way down the narrow valley dominated on all sides by snowy summits.

A flood of dazzling sunshine inundated this glistening, frozen desert, lighting it up with a cold blinding flame. No sign of life was visible in this ocean of mountains; no movement in this immeasurable solitude; no sound that disturbed the profound silence.

They had proceeded but a short distance when the younger of the guides, Ulrich Kunsi, sensibly hastened his pace, and leaving the two old men behind, rapidly approached the mule that bore the women.

Louise Hauser turned at the sound of his footsteps and greeted him with a melancholy smile. She was a slight blonde peasant girl, whose milky cheeks and colorless hair seemed to have been paled by her long sojourn among the glaciers; but as the young man reached her side and slackened his pace to address her a few cheerful words, a light flush came into her cheeks, and her eyes brightened visibly.

They had barely time to exchange a few phrases, however; for mother Hauser immediately began to enumerate with endless details all her recommendations for the season. It was to be Ulrich's first winter on the moun-

tain; but he felt no apprehensions, for had not his companion, old Gaspard Hari, already spent fourteen winters under the snows in the Schwarenbach Inn.

The young man listened in silence to the mother's advice, while his eyes remained intently fixed on the daughter's sad face. Now and then he replied in monosyllables, but his thoughts seemed far away and his calm features remained impassible.

They had now come to Daube lake, whose long frozen surface spread out in the bottom of the valley. To the right, the black perpendicular rocks of the Daubenhorn arose beside the enormous glacier of Loemmern, above which towers the Wildstrubel; and as they approached the defile of the Gemmi, where the descent to Loeche begins, their eyes suddenly rested on the vast horizon beyond the valley of the Rhone that stretched far and wide beneath their feet.

A multitude of white, uneven pinnacles glistened under the sun in the distance; the Mischabel with its two horns; the majestic Wissehorn; the massive Brunnegghorn; the re-

doubtable pyramid of Cervin, that man-killer; and the White-Tooth, that monstrous coquette. Then beneath them, at the bottom of a frightful abyss, they perceived Loeche, its houses seeming like grains of sand scattered in the enormous crevice opening on the Rhone and closed up by the Gemmi.

The mule stopped at the edge of the fantastic winding path leading down the mountain side to the almost invisible village at its foot, and the two women alighted to await the coming of old Hauser and Gaspard.

"Well, my good friends, we must now part," said the old inn-keeper, shaking hands warmly with the two guides. "Farewell, and be of good cheer until we meet again next year."

"Farewell," repeated Gaspard as he embraced his friend.

Then Mme. Hauser offered her cheeks in her turn, and the young girl followed her example.

"Do not forget the friends you leave behind," whispered Ulrich to Louise as he bent over her to give her a parting kiss.

"I shall not forget," she replied so softly that he guessed rather than heard the words.

"Farewell, and good health to you," repeated Jean Hauser, as he led the way down the mountain path, where they soon disappeared at a turn of the road.

The two men watched them until they had vanished, then slowly wended their way back to the Schwarenbach Inn.

It was now all over; they would remain alone without a glimpse of a familiar face for four or five months. They walked on in silence side by side for some time, then old Gaspard began to relate the incidents of his life in this desert during the preceding winter. His companion had been Michel Canol, who was now too old for such an occupation, for an accident might happen during those long days of solitude and they must depend on their own strength and resources. He had never found it lonely, however; for many distractions and pastimes could be found after all. One had but to resign himself to his fate from the first, and all went well.

Ulrich Kunsi listened with down-cast eyes, his thoughts still following the little party descending the winding path of the Gemmi.

They soon came in sight of the inn, appear-

ing like a mere black speck at the foot of the monstrous mountain of snow. As they opened the door, Sam, the big mountain dog, leaped joyously to their side, barking furiously with delight at their return.

"Come, my son," said old Gaspard to his companion; "we have no women to prepare our meal and must think of dinner. You shall pare the potatoes, while I see to the soup."

The morning of the following day seemed very long to Ulrich as he gazed sadly through the window at the glistening mountain in front of the house, while old Gaspard smoked quietly at the fireside. In the afternoon the young man went out and retraced the journey of the previous day, seeking to find the track left by the mule who had borne the two women. When he reached the defile of the Gemmi, he stretched himself on the edge of the abyss and gazed down at Loeche lying in its rocky well, the low houses resembling cobble stones, scattered over a prairie, from that dizzy height.

Louise Hauser was there in one of those gray inhabitations. But in which? Ulrich was

too far away to distinguish them separately How he longed to go down while it was yet possible!

But the sun had already vanished behind the tall dome of the Wildstrubel, and it was time to return. When he re-entered the house, Gaspard laid his pipe aside and proposed a game of cards. Thus they spent a couple of hours; and having partaken of supper, they retired for the night.

The days that followed were similar to the first; clear and cold, but without fresh snow. Old Gaspard spent the afternoons watching the eagles and a few other birds that ventured on these frozen heights, while Ulrich regularly returned to the defile of the Gemmi to contemplate the village. Then they played at cards, dice or dominoes, winning or losing objects of small value to make the game interesting.

One morning, Gaspard, who was the first to arise, called his companion to the window. A light, moving cloud of white flakes was noiselessly falling about and around them, slowly enshrouding them under a thick, mossy cover-

ing. This lasted for four days and nights. When it was over they were obliged to clear the doors and windows, and cut a passage and steps to ascend above the mass of snow, which twelve hours of frost had rendered harder than the granite of the mountain. From that time on they lived like prisoners, rarely venturing outside of their home. They shared the work equally and accomplished it regularly. Ulrich did the cleaning and wood chopping, while Gaspard devoted his time to the cooking and the fires; interrupting their regular and monotonous work only by long games of cards or dice. Both being good natured and peaceable, and having furthermore made a provision of patience and resignation for their winter on the summits, they never quarreled or even exchanged sharp or impatient words.

Sometimes Gaspard took his gun and went in search of the chamois, and whenever he was fortunate enough to kill one, there was great rejoicing over this banquet of fresh meat at Schwarenbach Inn.

Hoping to surprise some of these animals at the edge of the Wildstrubel at sunrise, the old

guide started out early one morning, leaving his companion fast asleep in his bed.

It was nearly ten o'clock when Ulrich arose. He breakfasted slowly, with Sam for his only companion, and when he had accomplished his monotonous work, he seated himself drearily by the fireside, while the dog returned to his accustomed corner and stretched himself out to sleep. A feeling of sadness, of fright even at his solitude invaded him, and a longing for the daily game of cards took possession of him. Starting up from his reverie, he gazed thoughtfully through the window for a few moments, then set out to meet his companion who was to return before nightfall.

The snow had leveled the whole valley, filling the crevices, effacing the two lakes, covering the rocks, and leaving nothing visible without the circle of towering pinnacles; thus forming a sort of immense tub of white dazzling ice.

It was now three weeks since the young man had visited his place of observation of the village below, and his steps unconsciously turned in that direction. Loeche was now also

buried under the snow and the dwellings were scarcely distinguishable beneath the pale shroud that enveloped the village; but he nev ertheless gazed long and wistfully at the hamlet in which dwelt his sweetheart, the blonde haired and pale cheeked Louise.

Then, turning to the right, he walked rapidly toward the glacier of Loemmern, striking the frozen snow with his stick and searching the horizon for a moving object on that measureless expanse.

When he reached the edge of the glacier he paused hesitatingly, asking himself if his companion might not have taken another way. The day was declining fast, and a vague feeling of uneasiness took possession of him. A dry, icy wind swept over the crystal surface in sharp gusts that made him shiver under his heavy garments, and his voice echoed strangely to his ears as he called his comrade's name in a loud prolonged cry. The voice floated away in the deathly silence of the sleeping mountain; it wafted far away in the distance over the deep, motionless, icy billows, like the cry of a

bird over the ocean waves; then it died away, and no response came to him.

Again he resumed his rapid pace. The sun had sunk behind the tall pinnacles which were still tinted by the rosy reflection of the heavens; but the depths of the valley were becoming gray. A sudden feeling of terror overcame him. It seemed to him that the silence, the cold, the solitude, the wintry death of these mountains, invaded him; chilling his blood, stiffening his limbs, and gradually transforming him into a frozen, motionless being. Turning abruptly, he flew wildly toward the inn.

"The old man must have returned another way," he thought, "and I shall find him at the fireside with a dead chamois at his feet."

The inn soon appeared in sight, but no smoke issued from the chimney. Redoubling his pace, he dashed to the door of the low dwelling and thrust it open. Sam leaped up to welcome him with a joyous bark; but Gaspard had not returned.

Bewildered at this discovery, Ulrich turned abruptly about, casting a searching glance around the room, half expecting to find his old

friend concealed in a corner. He then lighted a fire and prepared the supper, still hoping to hear his companion's returning footstep at any moment.

From time to time he went out to see if he had not appeared. Night had now fallen, that wan, pale night of the mountains, that livid, night lighted up at the horizon by a narrow yellow streak ready to sink behind the summits.

Then he would re-enter, seat himself beside the fire to warm his hands and feet, while his imagination conjured up all sorts of possible accidents.

Gaspard might have broken one of his legs, fallen into a hole or made a misstep and sprained his ankle. And he might now be lying on the snow, chilled and stiffened by the cold, calling despairingly for help in the silence of the night.

But where could he be found? The mountain was so vast, so rugged, so dangerous—especially at this season—that it would have required twenty guides at least to search in this immensity.

Ulrich nevertheless determined to make an attempt to find his comrade if he did not return

before midnight, and he at once began his preparations. Having placed sufficient food for a two days' journey in a bag, he wound a long stout rope around his body, examined his alpen—stock and cramp-irons, sharpened the hatchet which would serve to hew steps in the ice, and impatiently awaited the hour of departure. The fire sparkled invitingly in the chimney, the dog dozed near the flame, and the clock ticked loudly in its sonorous case.

He awaited; his ear strained to catch the distant sounds, shivering at each blast of icy winds that swept over the roof and against the walls of the dreary dwelling.

He started at the first stroke of midnight. Feeling nervous and affrighted, he placed water on the fire that he might drink a cup of hot coffee before leaving. As the clock struck one, he arose, awakened Sam, opened the door and strode rapidly in the direction of the Wild strubel. For five hours he continued to ascend, scaling the rocks by means of his cramp-irons, hewing steps in the glistening ice, ever pushing forward, often times pulling his dog after him up the too steep declivities with the aid of his

rope. At about six o'clock he reached one of the summits on which Gaspard frequently came to hunt the chamois, and here he rested to await day-light.

The sky was paling above his head, and, suddenly, a strange, mysterious light, borne no one knows whence, lit up the immense ocean of white pinnacles that arose around him to a distance of a hundred leagues. This vague light seemed to emerge from the very snow to pour itself into space. Little by little, the highest of the distant summits assumed a rosy hue and the red sun appeared behind the massive giants of the Bernese Alps.

Ulrich arose and resumed his way, with head bent down, searching for a trace and encouraging his dog to hunt for the scent.

He was now going down the mountain side, scrutinizing the fissures and calling aloud as he went. But his voice quickly died away in the silent immensity. Then he paused to listen, and, believing he distinguished a cry, he ran faster, calling again as he went, until breathless and exhausted he sank down in despair. About noon he shared his breakfast with Sam, who

was as weary as himself, and then recommenced his search.

Night found him still walking courageously onward. He had wandered over fifty kilometers of mountains. Being too far from the house to think of returning and too weary to drag himself further, he dug a hole in the snow and crept into it with his dog, covering himself with the blanket he had brought. Pressing close together, the man and the beast passed the night shivering side by side.

Ulrich slept but little; his mind was haunted by terrifying visions, and his limbs trembled with fear and cold. Day was breaking when he arose. His legs were stiff as iron bars, his soul filled with anguish, his heart palpitating with emotion, and his nerves unstrung. For a moment he feared he, too, might die of cold in this solitude, and the terror of such a death roused his energy and vigor anew.

He now turned toward the inn, stumbling and falling at almost every step, followed by Sam, who hopped along on three legs.

It was four o'clock in the afternoon when he finally reached Schwarenbach. The house

was still empty. He mechanically built a fire, ate and slept, too weary and stupefied to even think.

How long he slept he knew not. But suddenly a cry: "Ulrich!" pierced through his stupor and aroused him from his slumber. He started up and rubbed his eyes. Had he dreamed? Was it one of those mysterious calls which disturb the dreams of uneasy souls?

No! He heard it still; the piercing shriek vibrated through his whole being and resounded in his ears even now. Some one had called him. Some one was there near the house; he could not doubt it.

Rushing to the door, he opened it, and called out with all his strength: "Is it you, Gaspard?" But he received no reply; not a sound, not a moan, not a murmur. Nothing! It was night and the snow appeared like a pall. The wind had arisen; that frosty breath which cracks the rocks and kills all life on these abandoned heights. It came in sudden gusts, more parching and more deathly than the fiery wind of the desert. Again he cried: "Gaspard! Gaspard! Gaspard!"

Then he waited, but all remained silent on the mountain. A sudden terror thrilled him to the marrow. In one bound he was in the house. Banging the door behind him, he bolted it securely and sank trembling into a chair, convinced that he had been called by his comrade at the moment his soul had taken flight.

Of this he was as certain as that he was alive. He felt assured that Gaspard Hari had lingered in a death agony during those two days and three nights, somewhere in one of those deep immaculate ravines, the whiteness of which is more sinister than the gloom of a cavern, and that at the moment of death he had thought of his companion. The instant his soul had been freed it had flown to the inn and called him by virtue of that mysterious and terrible power which the souls of the dead possess to haunt the living. That voiceless soul had cried out into the stupefied soul of the sleeper; it had cried out its last farewell or its curse on the man who had not searched long enough for his best comrade.

And Ulrich felt that it was there, near him, the other side of the wall; behind the door he

had just bolted. It hovered about like a night bird that rustles its wings against a lighted window; and the terrified man almost cried out in horror. He wanted to fly, but dared not to go out. He dared not, and never would dare; for the phantom would remain there day and night hovering about the inn, until the body of the old guide should be found and buried in the consecrated grounds of the cemetery.

Day finally dawned, and the young man recovered some of his assurance with the return of the bright sunlight. He prepared his meal, made soup for the dog, then again sank gloomily in his seat before the fire, his heart tortured with anxiety and fear as he thought of the old man lying on the frozen snow.

As soon as night again fell on the mountain, however, new terrors assailed him. He nervously paced the dark kitchen dimly lighted by the flame of a single candle, listening, still listening for that fearful cry which had pierced the gloomy silence of without during the previous night. And the wretched man felt more alone than any man had ever been! He was alone in that immense desert of snow, alone

six thousand feet above the inhabited world, above human dwellings, above noisy, palpitating life; alone in the frozen heavens! A mad desire to fly, to reach Loeche by hurling himself into the abyss took possession of him. But he dared not even open the door; convinced that the dead man would bar the way that he might not be left alone on those heights.

Toward midnight, weary of walking and overcome by fear and agony, he fell asleep in a chair, for he feared his bed as we fear a haunted spot.

Suddenly, the piercing cry of the preceding night fell on his ear with such distinctness that he instinctively extended his arms to repel the phantom, and he fell backward with his chair. Aroused by the noise, Sam began to howl dismally, sniffing around the house in search of the source of danger. At the door he paused and gave vent to a low growl, his hair bristling and his tail lashing his flanks.

Wild with fright, Ulrich had risen; and holding the chair aloft, he cried: "Don't come in, don't come in, or I shall kill you!"

And the dog, urged by this menace, barked furiously at the invisible enemy that defied his master's voice.

By degrees, however, Sam grew calmer and returned to his corner by his fire; but he was still uneasy and growled between his teeth.

Ulrich, in his turn, finally recovered his senses; but feeling faint with terror, he opened the cupboard, and, taking out a bottle of brandy, swallowed several glasses of the liquid in succession. As his ideas became confused, his courage returned and a fiery fever ran through his vains.

He ate little on the following day, contenting himself with copious draughts of alcohol. For many days he lived in a drunken stupor. The moment the thought of old Gaspard returned to him, he recommenced drinking and never stopped until he fell to the floor overcome by intoxication.

But scarcely did the fumes of the liquor begin to dissipate, when again the cry of "Ulrich!" started him like a bullet crashing through his skull. Rising up, he would stagger forward, stretching out his hands to keep from falling

and calling wildly on Sam to protect him. Then the dog, who seemed to have become as mad as his master, would dash to the door, scratch it with his claws, and gnaw it with his sharp teeth, while the young man quaffed long draughts of the fiery liquor that would annihilate his thoughts and wild, uncontrollable terror.

In three weeks he had absorbed all his provision of alcohol. But this continued intoxication had only stupefied his terror, and it reawakened more furiously than ever as soon as it became impossible to calm it. These weeks of drunkenness, combined with the absolute solitude of his surrounding, had inflamed his one fixed haunting idea, and it had sunk into his brain with the penetrating force of an auger. He now paced the room like a caged beast, pressing his ear to the door to listen for the voice of the phantom and defying it through the wall.

Then, when overcome by fatigue, he sank into slumber, he again heard the voice that made him leap to his feet. At last one night, like all cowards driven to extremities, he

dashed to the door and opened it wide, determined to see the one who incessantly called him and force him to stop.

A breath of icy wind struck him in the face, freezing him to the marrow; and he hastily slammed the door and bolted it, without remarking that Sam had rushed out. Then shivering with cold, he piled more wood on the fire and sat before it to warm himself. But suddenly he started; someone was scratching on the wall and moaning.

"Begone!" he cried wildly.

A long, plaintive moan was his only reply.

Terror now carried away his remaining senses. "Begone! begone!" he repeated, his haggard eyes wandering around the room in search of a hiding place. But *the other* continued to moan and scratch against the door.

With superhuman strength Ulrich grasped the heavy oaken cupboard, filled with crockery and provisions, and dragged it to the door to serve as a barricade. He then piled the remaining furniture against the windows, shutting out the light with the mattresses and bedding. But the one without still continued the

lugubrious howls, and the young man now responded by similar sounds.

Days and nights passed without either ceasing to howl. The one outside incessantly wandering around the house, and tearing its walls with his nails, as if bent on demolishing them; the other, within, following all these movements anxiously, crouching against the stones and replying to all these appeals with frightful cries.

One night the noise from without ceased; and overcome with fatigue, Ulrich immediately sunk into sleep.

He awoke without thought or rememberance, as though his brain had been emptied during that overwhelming slumber. He was hungry and he ate.

* * * * * *

Winter was over at last. The defile of the Gemmi was once more practicable, and the Hauser family set out to return to the inn. When they had reached the top of the ascent, the women mounted the mule and the little party proceeded slowly toward Schwarenbach. As they went on, the conversation naturally

turned to the two guides they had left on the mountain a few months before, and they expressed their astonishment that one of them, at least, had not come down as soon as the descent had become possible to give them news of their long isolation.

They soon came in sight of the inn, still burried in snow and glistening with icicles. The door and windows were closed, and a thin cloud of smoke ascended from the chimney. This reassured old Hauser, who had felt some alarm at the non-appearance of the guides at Loeche ere this. As they drew nearer, however, they preceived the skeleton of an animal lying near the door. As poor Sam had been picked nearly to the bones by the eagles that continually hover about those mountains, they were somewhat puzzled at the sight of the denuded skeleton, and eagerly rushed forward to examine it.

"It must be Sam," finally said the mother; then raising her voice she called: "Hi, Gaspard!"

A hoarse cry resembling that of a beast, responded from the interior.

"Hi, Gaspard!" repeated old Hauser with a vague feeling of uneasiness.

Another cry, similar to the first, was the only reply.

The three men then tried to open the door; but it resisted all their efforts. Going to the stables, they procured a long beam which they used as a battering ram. Under their united efforts the wood finally shivered and flew into splinters. Then a great noise shook the house; and, behind the overturned cupboard, they saw a man with long hair and beard that fell over his breast and shoulders, who gazed at them with wild, dilated eyes.

Although none of the others recognized him, Louise Hauser at once cried out: "It is Ulrich, Mama!" and on closer scrutiny the mother found that it was indeed he, although his hair was white as snow.

He allowed them to approach and even touch him, but he made no reply to their questions. And when he was taken to Loeche, the physicians declared he was mad. No one ever learned what had become of his companion.

Louise Hauser was brought to the verge of the grave that summer, by a lingering illness which was attributed to the cold temperature of the mountain.

The person charging this material is responsible for its return to the library from which it was withdrawn on or before the **Latest Date** stamped below.

Theft, mutilation, and underlining of books are reasons for disciplinary action and may result in dismissal from the University.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LIBRARY AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

MAY 5 1977
MAY 5 1977

L161—O-1096

"The foremost baby's book of the world."—*New Orleans Picayune.*

The Beautiful Land of Nod.

BY
ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

Poems, Songs, Stories and Allegories, Beautifully Printed and Bound. With over Sixty Original Illustrations by LOUISE M. MEARS.

Square quarto, cloth, gold and black design.....**$1 00**

"The Land of Nod is an exquisite child's book and is the perfection of elegance and simplicity. The marvels of nursery rhyme and story will enchant and bewilder with its artistic profusion."—*Minneapolis Tribune.*

Ella Wheeler Wilcox's works can be obtained from all booksellers throughout the world, or will be sent postpaid by the publishers upon receipt of price.

W. B. CONKEY COMPANY, Publishers,

341-351 DEARBORN STREET,

CHICAGO.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox's Poems

3 vols., 12mo, cloth, in box.....$3 00
3 vols., 12mo, white vellum, in box... 4 50
3 vols., 12mo, half calf, in box..... 7 50

The different portraits in each volume are from photographs taken especially for these editions.

Poems of Passion.

57th edition.

12mo, cloth.....$1 00
" white vellum..... 1 50
" half calf..... 2 50

"Only a woman of genius could produce such remarkable work."
London Illustrated News.

Poems of Pleasure.

21st edition.

12mo, cloth.....$1 00
" white vellum..... 1 50
" half calf..... 2 50

"Mrs. Wilcox is a consummate artist with a touch that now and then reminds one of Lord Byron's impassionate strains."
Paris Register.

Maurine and Other Poems.

26th edition.

12mo, cloth.....$1 00
" white vellum..... 1 50
" half calf..... 2 50

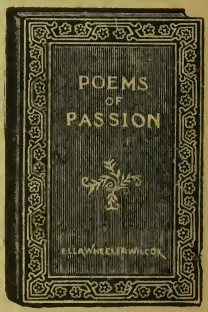
"Maurine is an ideal poem about a perfect woman."
The South, Atlanta, Ga.

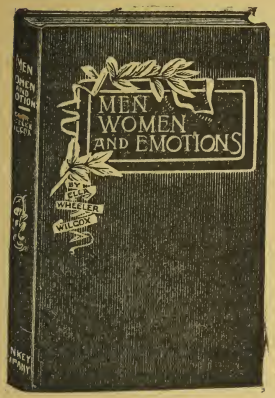
Poems of Passion.

New edition.

Handsomely and profusely illustrated. Printed on heavy plate paper.

16mo, cloth.....$0 75
" fancy sides, gold top.... 1 00
" full morocco and gold... 2 50





MEN, WOMEN AND EMOTIONS

BY
ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

12mo, paper.....$0 50
" cloth..... 1 00

While the name of Ella Wheeler Wilcox is known mainly through her popular poetical works, there is a constantly increasing interest manifested in her prose essays, which cover a field entirely her own.

Mrs. Wilcox possesses a talent for safely handling dangerous and hitherto tabooed subjects. Her pen is like a skilled surgeon's knife, with which she lays bare human emotions and passions, and in epigrams of warning, sympathy and counsel she crystallizes her discoveries for the benefit of humanity.

However daring and unusual the topics she discourses, no one can read any chapter in this book without feeling stronger to resist temptation and braver to cope with life's battles. Every phase of emotion is analyzed, every relation of man to woman treated, every folly and frailty probed; the lancet is often sharp, but there is balm and healing on its point.

"Her fame has reached all parts of the world. and her popularity seems to grow with each succeeding year."
American Newsman, New York.

THE PEOPLE'S SERIES

50 POPULAR COPYRIGHTED BOOKS

The most attractive low priced series of books now on the market, comprising many well known and standard works and also several that have not before been published. Issued in three styles, as follows:

Enameled paper covers, printed in colors,	25 cents each.
Half Imitation morocco, fancy sides, plain edges,	50 " "
" " " " gilt sides and linings, gilt top,	75 " "

For sale by all booksellers, or sent postpaid upon receipt of price by the publishers.

1. **Stories from the French.** By Guy de Maupassant and others.
2. **Stronger than Death.** By Emile Richbourg.
3. **The Perfume of the Violet.** By Frank Howard Howe.
4. **The Prima Donna of the Slums.** By Stanley McKenna.
5. **Under the Maples.** By Wallace N. Hinman.
6. **The Mortgage Foreclosed.** By E. H. Thayer.
7. **A Little Queen of Tragedy.** By Laura B. Marsh.
8. **Love and Tears.** By Arsène Houssaye.
9. **In Chase of Crime.** By Fortune du Boisgobey.
10. **A Modern Quixote.** By S. C. McCay.
11. **The Oklahoma Scout.** By Theo. Baughmann.
12. **The Williams Brothers.** By Adrian Percy.
13. **Banditti of the Prairies.** By Edward Bonney.
14. **The American Siberia.** By J. C. Powell.
15. **Her Shattered Idol.** By Belle V. Logan.
16. **The Mysterious Juror.** By Fortune du Boisgobey.
17. **Allan Quatermain.** By H. Rider Haggard.
18. **The Crime of Philip Guthrie.** By Lulah Ragsdale.
19. **Angeline.** By J. N. Percival.
20. **Old Californian Days.** By James Steele.
21. **What Will the World Say?** By Mrs. Holmes.
22. **What Would You Do, Love?** By Mrs. Holmes.
23. **How It Came About.** By Maja Spencer.
24. **Divorced.** By Madeline V. Dahlgren.
25. **La Veuve.** By Octave Feuillet.
26. **L'Americaine.** By Jules Claretie.
27. **Aurette.** By Henri Greville.
28. **The Evil Eye.** By Theophile Gautier.
29. **Nameless Love.** By Charles Lomon.
30. **The Revenge of Circe.** By Xavier de Montepin.
31. **A Cardinal Sin.** By Eugene Sue.
32. **A Fatal Love.** By Ramirez Arias.
33. **The Man from Wall Street.** By St. George Rathborne.
34. **The Strange Case of Henry Toplass and Capt. Shiers.** By John W. Postgate.
35. **The Loyalty of Langstreth.** By John R. V. Gilliat.
36. **Youngest Soldier of the Grand Armee.** By Fortune du Boisgobey.
37. **Peck's Bad Boy, No. 1.** By Geo. W. Peck.
38. **Peck's Bad Boy, No. 2.** By Geo. W. Peck.
39. **Peck's Fun.** By Geo. W. Peck.
40. **Peck's Sunshine.** By Geo. W. Peck.
41. **Peck's Boss Book.** By Geo. W. Peck.
42. **Peck's Irish Friend.** By Geo. W. Peck.
43. **How Private Peck Put Down the Rebellion.** By Geo. W. Peck.
44. **Chestnuts.** By Bill Nye.
45. **Baled Hay.** By Bill Nye.
46. **Bill Nye and Boomerang.** By Bill Nye.
47. **Forty Liars and Other Lies.** By Bill Nye.
48. **The Lime Kiln Club.** By M. Quad.
49. **American Wit and Humor.** By Peck, Nye and M. Quad.
50. **Wit, Humor and Pathos.** By Eli Perkins.

Frequent additions will be made to this list, from the works of the best American and foreign authors.

W. B. CONKEY COMPANY, Publishers,
341-351 Dearborn Street, CHICAGO.